

Early Learning Advisory Committee

Minutes

February 13, 2015

Call to Order 1:02 pm

Present:

Kevin Bain
Charlie Geier
Melanie Brizzi
Connie Sherman
Tammy Veselsky
Guests:
Beth Barrett

Absent:

John Burnett
Beckie Minglin
Alonzo Weems

Kevin called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone back in 2015, with thanks for being part of this important work.

I. Review of Minutes

No additions or corrections. Melanie motioned to approve. Charlie seconded. Minutes were approved.

On January 23, 2015 ELAC brought all the workgroups together for a kick-off meeting at Wayne Township Preschool. Attendance was good with 92 individuals in attendance. It was great to be in an early childhood setting and hear some of the stories of the children who attend there. Goals of this collective meeting were to celebrate 2014 successes, to foster collaboration and to provide an opportunity for communication between workgroups. Each group also planned for, and set deliverables, for 2015. ELAC members provided very positive feedback and urged that groups get together frequently to collaborate work efforts.

II. CCDBG Update: Kevin asked Melanie to comment on how changes to the CCDBG Act (federal block grant funding) will impact the work of ELAC.

Melanie reported the CCDBG Act has not been reauthorized since 1996. Many changes have occurred in several of the areas ELAC workgroups are focusing their efforts - children's wellbeing, quality of childcare, health & safety, workforce. A number of key components will impact the system:

1. Family friendly CCDF eligibility policies –
 - Indiana will move from 6 month to 12 month reauthorization beginning in Oct. 2015. This is good for families, children and programs. This will however lengthen the waitlist, which is now around 8,000 children, as families are served longer
 - Indiana will move to a graduated phase-out (AKA the cliff effect) as we currently have different entry and exit point for CCDF – with the phase out, once a family meets 170% FPL copays will gradually increase until they reach 250% FPL to smooth out income transitions – this change will also take effect in Oct. 2015

2. With other significant changes occurring, we have been working the past few years to be well prepared for reauthorization including:
 - National comprehensive federal criminal history checks
 - Changes in training requirements
 - Staff/child ratios & group size

These changes, now required, will help us to be prepared to meet eligibility.

As of July 1st, we will have several changes for unlicensed CCDF providers in Indiana that align with these federal changes, including:

- Requirements to follow staff/child ratios & group size
- Provide adequate nutrition
- Provide a schedule of daily activities
- 12 hours of training per year related to the age of children they are caring for

Melanie explained there is a timeline in the handouts, and we have some time to build in changes. Melanie will keep workgroups informed as there are several places within the law that specifically mention ELAC's role. The state will submit their 3 year plan by June 30, 2015 and Melanie requested ELAC review of that document prior to submission.

Charlie gave a report on the SIG (school improvement grant). The federal government gives states the opportunity to participate in a competitive grant called 1003g – AKA “the little g grant”. This gives states an opportunity for federal dollars for one of several different school improvement models. Typically in the past there have been 4 models and this year includes an additional option for an Early Learning model. This grant is intended for schools that scored a “D” or “F”. Available funds range from \$50,000 to \$2 million for a 5 year grant, including one year of planning. Minimum length of grant is 3 years. DOE will be applying –they have received in the past. Typically Indiana receives around \$10 million to grant –applications are due April 15, 2015.

III. Workgroup Updates:

The January 23rd meeting gave specific 2015 deliverables for each workgroup:

Child Development and Well Being– Connie Sherman reported priorities for 2015 will be reviewing Foundations with focus on alignment; they will also work on a comprehensive definition of health including mental health. Connie sees the health piece as requiring collaboration with several other workgroups. There is a lot of expertise in their group around the health piece.

Family Engagement– Keith Reissaus was at the meeting earlier but had to leave so Kevin relayed his report for this group. Family Engagement is mandated with both pilot programs – On My Way and EEMG. There is interest from providers on best practices. The workgroup completed the Family Engagement Framework for Indiana and now they are working on beginning to compile a toolkit of resources available for providers in both pilot studies, as well as others. This will become a “living, breathing document” to build on and provide as a resource for providers.

Funding Streams – Kyle Wehmann reported for this group. This group is working on a “beta version” of a document outlining current funding streams for Early Learning. Some

gaps need to be filled in and then the document will be circulated to stakeholders. Another 2015 deliverable would be to research and fill in gaps in private funding for this document. This group is also looking at defining effectiveness and efficiency, and the blending and braiding of funding sources.

Provider Participation and Advancement – Melanie Brizzi reported this group did not meet in February. The January meeting helped to define this workgroup’s 2015 deliverables. First, the group will look at the need to assure we are communicating accurately and consistently the different pathways for different provider types, and then to identify the barriers to participation in PTQ and to begin working with other groups to overcome those barriers.

Workforce & Professional Development Update – This group has moved from gathering to analyzing data on workforce. This group has been working with state and national experts on this data, with an aim to project what will be needed in workforce by 2020, along with compensation and benefits. This group continues to receive updates on the Indiana Higher Education Inventory being conducted by the Center for Child Care Employment out of the University of Berkley. The Preliminary report will be ready in April and the final report to ELAC will be presented in June. This group has also been finalizing the 2014 Childcare Workforce Study. The second half of the year will focus on similar goals for Professional Development.

Data Coordination and System Integration – Charlie Geier reported this group has been assisted with data transparency, privacy and coordination by an attorney from Ice Miller who has participated in meetings and will present in February. This is the last piece of the research brief before bringing it to ELAC. This group has representation on INK’s research group and Charlie will be able to bring Early Learning perspective and conversation to this group.

Evaluation of Child Outcomes – Kevin Bain reported for this group. Yesterday, the group decided on 3 priorities for 2015:

1. White paper that defines terminology (various tests/ KRA-KEA, terms used in child outcomes)
2. A systematic collection of tools being used in state for kindergarten entrance assessments
3. Investigating Indiana Head Start outcomes to see if our state outcomes are different than national picture and if Indiana HS has an impact on child outcomes

IV. Early Education Matching Grant

Melanie reported that since the last meeting, the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning extended the deadline for year 2 EEMG – now due Thursday, February 19, 2015. There is roughly \$2 million in funding set aside for each year. The OECOSL has extended the contract with IU and Michael Conn-Powers for the evaluation of the 2nd cohort. EEMG is available to all counties except the 5 pilot counties. Funding has been requested to extend for additional 2 years – we won’t know if that is approved until end of the legislative budget session sometime in April. Melanie reported year one is going well and we are looking forward to seeing data available in June or July.

V. On My Way Pre-K Pilot



The OECOSL continues to enroll the first cohort of children with On My Way Pre-K grants. Initial estimates were that 350 grants would be granted; the OECOSL received over 1800 applications. With the great capacity building efforts in each of the 4 January pilot counties, the office felt closer to 460 grants could be granted, so we increased our available grants in each county. As of today, there are 368 fully enrolled children and 48 partially enrolled children (i.e., the family still needs to complete their paperwork). The Office anticipates next week all 461 children will be fully enrolled and there are still 54 families with appointments pending. We should be between 400-450 families receiving grants by the end of February.

Moving forward, the second cohort will begin with family applications available online February 23, 2015. All 5 counties will participate in August (Allen, Lake, Jackson, Marion & Vanderburgh). Intakes will continue to take applications through April, with a lottery for each county anticipated at the beginning of May. This should allow families the most amount of time to select a pre-k program and allow for visits to those programs not operating in the summer. Programs will begin in August with a very similar enrollment process utilized for the first cohort.

Preliminary Data of current enrollment in the January cohort:

47% school year / 53% calendar year

75% full day/ 25% part time

128 eligible programs from licensed centers, registered ministries, licensed homes, public schools & private schools

We are now reaching out to families of 4 year olds attending kindergarten in 2016-17 school year. The OECOSL anticipates serving about 1600 children in the second cohort, but there are many variables that will determine the amount of the grants awarded. We are working on partnerships including one with the City of Indianapolis and their proposed pre-k program that also includes 3 year olds.

The OECOSL continues to focus on recruitment of families and building provider capacity in each of the pilot counties. In partnership with Early Learning Indiana, United Way of Central Indiana released a grant for providers that is due on February 15, 2015. Grants range from \$5,000 – \$30,000 for innovative capacity building or to increase quality leading to better child outcomes for On My Way Pre-k children.

Purdue University has been chosen to conduct the longitudinal study and the OECOSL is in the contracting process with them. They will be conducting, beginning with the pre-k year, both pre and post child assessment data to see the growth over that pre-k year and looking at school readiness. The longitudinal study will follow those children through 3rd grade looking at many aspects including academic progress and factors such as expulsion and suspension. All indicators of a child's well-being, educational outcomes, and social emotional outcomes will be included. Purdue will be contracted to study all this over the next 6½ years.

Melanie responded this has been a very collaborative effort with many partners involved. Local intakes have covered the enrollment process allowing them to have conversations with families concerning best options for their child. Childcare resource and referral specialists have had one-on-one contacts that are helping with enrollment. Along with enrollment of providers, we have worked with getting them what they need to effectively use ISTAR-KR. One of the things they can apply for with the grants is technology/equipment needed to perform and score the assessment. The OECOSL also coordinated training for all coaches to assist providers with enrollment and administration of ISTAR-KR. Charlie commented additional staff may be needed at DOE to expand this process for the fall 2015.

VII. Other Business

Kevin asked Stephanie Bothun from the Indianapolis Mayor's office to give the group an update on the Marion County Pre-k plan which aligns with a lot of the work ELAC is doing. Over the past 7 months, the City of Indianapolis has been working with city/ county council members and partnering with the corporate and philanthropic community to see how to serve more children in high quality programs.

Timeline: December 2014 – City passed ordinance creating the Indianapolis Preschool program – focus is on child scholarships. The corporate community has responded, and also partnered with United Way of Central Indiana and others on capacity building funds for providers.

February 2015 – There was a meeting on Wed. Feb. 11, 2015 where United Way of Central Indiana was approved as program administrator and funding ordinances passed committee unanimously. The City is looking at \$4.2 million available in funding for the 2015-16 school year.

March 2, 2015 – Final vote on approval of funding. If the vote passes, the program will be implemented.

This is supplemental program to that from the state, and will be aligned with On My Way Pre-K grant requirements. Initial income requirements will be at the 127% of FPL but if all children are served and there are still funds available, then the city has the ability to request funds be used to serve families at 138% of FPL and move up to 185% of FPL until all funds are expended. The city program also includes 3 year olds. At least 25% of the grants awarded will need to be for 3 year olds– that number could climb up to 50%. The City is working with OECOSL so families will only have to complete one application and then it will be sorted out on the back end what program they are eligible for. Provider eligibility will be the same. There is also a family engagement component. The evaluation process is being worked on. The city funds will provide the match for On My Way Pre-k. The city is in talks with Purdue about the addition of data on 3 year olds and having 2 years of pre-k data on child outcomes and school readiness. It would also include differences observed with the additional income guidelines.

Charlie introduced Erin Kissling as the new Early Learning Specialist at the Department of Education.

Next meeting date – Friday, March 13, 2015 1:00-3:00pm EST in Conference Room #4 of the State Government Conference Center.

Closing:

Charlie motioned to end the meeting. Tammy seconded. All approved.

Meeting adjourned at 1:53 pm.