

Early Learning Advisory Committee
Minutes
July 10, 2015
Government Center – Conference Room 4

Call to Order 1:02 pm

Present:

Kevin Bain
Melanie Brizzi
Tammy Veselsky
Alonzo Weems
Connie Sherman

Absent:

Charlie Geier
John Burnett

Guests:

Beth Barrett
Lamont Hulse, Director of Partnerships for Early Learners

Kevin called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm and welcomed everyone.

I. Review of Minutes

Committee reviewed the June 5, 2015 minutes. No additions or corrections. Tammy motioned to approve. Melanie seconded. Minutes were approved.

II. Workgroup Updates:

Each month the seven workgroups report out on their focus/accomplishments for the past month and summarize the workgroup's priorities for the next few months. They also inform ELAC of any planned recommendations for upcoming ELAC meetings to assist in setting the agenda for future meetings.

Funding Streams - Melanie Brizzi, workgroup member, gave the update report. The workgroup has completed their draft memo "Analysis of Funding that Supports Early Childhood Programs and Services in Indiana"; it is now being sent to stakeholders for comment with responses requested by the end of July. During their July meeting, Lori Connors-Tadros from CELO (Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes) joined the meeting to discuss her recent publication on innovative state financing strategies to fund Early Learning. Next month the group will modify the Draft Memo based on stakeholders' responses. The team will also discuss providing assistance to the Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning (OECOSL) with a provider cost study to inform CCDF reimbursement rates, and a tool to assist providers with accurate and effective budgeting – both requirements of CCDBG Reauthorization. Melanie discussed Indiana's needs for cost modeling to utilize funding streams maximally, and to help understand the blending and braiding of different streams. The group will consider adding team members who have a finance/business analysis background.

Kevin requested that ELAC members receive the final version of the Draft Memo prior to the August meeting to allow time to review.

Workforce and Professional Development – Diana Wallace, co-chair, reported the workgroup met June 11th. The group received a preliminary report on the Higher Education Inventory from The Center for Study of Childcare Employment, UC Berkley and is working on completing their strategic paper on Indiana’s workforce and professional development. Diana extended an invitation to ELAC members to attend the September 10th Indiana Higher Education Forum, which will feature report findings. The committee is assessing who might be missing on the committee and looking to fill some spots. The formal report of the Higher Education Inventory will be presented by the Center for Child Care Employment at the September ELAC meeting.

Kevin recognized this workgroup for their contributions to the June 30th ELAC report and thanked them for their assistance.

Child Development and Well Being – Carrie Bales, co-chair, reported this group met June 25th and has been focusing on finding health data for children ages 0-5. Thus far, the group’s experience is that this data is difficult to find except in national research. The group’s immediate focus is on supporting providers and coaches in their efforts to support the healthy development of children. The workgroup discussed developing a health checklist and self-assessment, as well as defining best practices. Next month, the group will continue to explore existing health models and create a custom survey to assess what is needed. The committee discussed the prevalence of surveys being sent to providers, and asked that where possible, surveys should be developed collaboratively to reduce the burden.

Provider Participation and Advancement – Melanie, co-chair, reported during their June meeting this workgroup hosted a panel discussion of representatives from communities with well-organized infrastructure around early childhood education, to discuss community coalition building around Early Learning. The workgroup identified a framework to address this and will be continuing this work in their next meetings. The July workgroup was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts but will hit the ground running in August when they will have 2 presentations - one from the Partnerships for Early Learners initiative and one on the EEMG evaluation update. The focus of this group has now shifted to community collaborations and Melanie announced Lamont Hulse, Director of Partnerships for Early Learners, has graciously agreed to be a third co-chair for this committee to help lead these efforts.

Evaluation of Child and Family Outcomes – Kevin Bain, co-chair, reported the workgroup met yesterday and is continuing short-term work as 3 sub-committees. The Indiana Head Start Outcomes sub-committee is developing a survey to collect information from local Head Starts on assessment tools used, reporting formats and will request a copy of their annual report. They have also been meeting with the Indiana Head Start Association president and will coordinate all efforts with that office. The Statewide Assessment Practices sub-committee reported on their recent survey findings from school districts statewide and the return rate to date is excellent. They also plan to reissue the survey after

Early Learning Advisory Committee the first of August when school resumes. The last sub-committee, focused on an Assessment White Paper, shared a current draft of the paper with the full workgroup and the group felt it covered the terms with understandability and clarity for the lay audience. There were minimal edits from the workgroup and the paper will be updated and ready for ELAC review in August.

Data Coordination – John Peirce, committee member, reported for the workgroup. The Indiana Department of Education did submit the SLDS Grant Proposal on time and the timetable for the announcement of grant recipients is uncertain. The group is still looking for a replacement co-chair for Karen and other new members as they are the smallest workgroup. John said there were 9 members and they would look for prospective members from different geographical locations but specific skill needs for the group have not yet been identified.

The group continues to move forward with their white paper sub-questions identifying what data is needed and what elements are needed to obtain that data. John also reported the group will have the two-page data transparency and protection document portion of the white paper ready for the August ELAC meeting.

It was requested that the final data privacy paper be sent to ELAC committee members before the August meeting and John will highlight committee needs when this draft is sent.

Family Engagement - John Peirce, co-chair, also reported for this workgroup. The workgroup was delighted that ELAC approved their work on the Family Engagement Toolkit and they have sent recommendations to the OECOSL for the associated training and technical assistance for PTQ coaches. Webinars are planned for early August and plans are to orient On My Way Pre-K and EEMG grantees in September. The group has formed 3 subgroups to address the Toolkit's introduction, content and readability, to formulate webinar content and to work on the visual design before dissemination. Next month, IU, through their work with Early Learning Indiana, will help prepare content for the webinars. The workgroup will gather feedback from coaches and work on readability of the Toolkit, along with refining the visual design as recommended by ELAC. Next month the group will also respond to the ELAC recommendation regarding a generic definition for Home Visiting and will begin work on a family-friendly version of the Early Childhood Foundations.

III. Early Learning Indiana Presentation

Lamont Hulse, Director of Partnerships for Early Learners, gave a PowerPoint presentation to ELAC. Partnerships for Early Learners is a five-year initiative funded by a \$20M investment from Lilly Endowment, Inc. Core work will be done through key partners around the state, building capacity that will enable improvement in early childhood education throughout Indiana.

The overarching strategic goal is that 75% of children in child care and early education in Indiana will be in high quality programs. Three goals of the program and strategies include:

1. Build Supply AND Demand
 - a. Quality Improvement – increase quality in 400 programs in Paths to QUALITY™
This will include looking at aspirational levels of quality – PTQ 2.0
 - b. Capacity Building – add 1,000 new high-quality, affordable, sustainable seats
2. Invest in People Closest to Children
 - a. Workforce Development –300 degrees and high quality credentials
 - b. Family Engagement – engage 7,000 families
3. Create the Future System
 - a. Innovative Partnerships – to sustain work
 - b. Local Coalitions
 - c. Leadership and Advocacy –statewide cross-sector leadership

The group has completed several milestones including establishing partnerships with Child Care Answers (Central Indiana), Early Childhood Alliance (Northern Indiana), and 4C of Southern Indiana; fully staffing the project; working with seven strategy partners to draft and refine strategy papers; and visiting communities throughout the state to explore early childhood at the local level.

The Partnership for Early Learners recently helped to fund capacity building grants for On My Way Pre-K providers to increase capacity and improve program quality in the 5 pilot counties. Early actions have also included working closely with Registered Ministries, and recently funding training for PTQ coaches-Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI). They are also working with the Indiana Philanthropy Alliance as a community partner and partnering with families through AmeriCorps work and a family texting pilot.

The group has identified several emerging strategies focused on designated cohorts of quality and piloting proven practices: building both the supply AND demand for quality and working as a state AND local communities both top down and bottom up; looking at quality beyond our current targets – building on Paths to QUALITY™ with PTQ 2.0; and building advocacy so “we have an early childhood education system that is ready and worthy of new public funding when it becomes available.”

The group is building strategic alignment with statewide partners including OECOSL and the Indiana Department of Education. We would like to add the Early Learning Advisory Committee to ensure we are working in partnership for Indiana’s children and families.

After the presentation, there were a few questions from ELAC concerning achievement of the goals. Lamont remarked the initiative is working closely with many statewide partners to complete this work, as most of these goals are outside of Early Learning Indiana’s normal work scope. Another question dealt with what advocacy would look like within this plan. United Way of Central Indiana will be working on advocacy and the group is counting on statewide early learning partnership assistance in the 5 years to get results.

Kevin asked that ELAC members be sent a copy of the presentation so ELAC can look at the strategies and goals and see how the workgroups can build on the momentum and come alongside to support this work. Kevin mentioned adding ELI staff to existing workgroups could help embed this work.

Alonzo commented this shows the power of what can happen when you take a long established, well regarded philanthropic partner like Lilly Endowment, who has always

Early Learning Advisory Committee had an educational component, and they choose to invest in Early Learning – that message is now highly visible to the broader philanthropic community. Any corporation or endowment fund focused on education should likewise be considering an early learning component – speeding the shift in education terminology from K-12 to P-12.

IV. Head Start Standards Release

Melanie reported the new Head Start standards have been released – the notice of proposed rulemaking. The document is open for public comment until August 18, 2015. Several key changes include fewer but more powerful standards – moving from compliance to quality and streamlining for better understandability. There are 5 key changes in the new standards. The first change is a movement to shift to full day/full year programs (minimum of 6 hours per day). They believe this dosage will give better outcomes but raises funding issues. The second category is reorganization to remove duplicate standards and reduce the burden to providers as the move is made towards quality. The new standards will also address eliminating expulsion in favor of changing the behavior, expulsion just decreases the child's access to early care and education. The fourth component is monitoring attendance and addressing chronic absenteeism. Absenteeism affects child outcomes, graduation and other factors and dealing with chronic absenteeism in early childhood is a priority. The fifth change is allowing for more flexibility for local innovative practices. These practices must be documented and research-based. Melanie encouraged everyone to please submit comments by August 18th.

Melanie also invited Cheryl Miller, Head Start Director, from the audience to comment. She reported her office has had two conference calls with the national office. Most programs are looking at standards and across Indiana they are encouraging responses. They are also hearing concerns about the elimination of double sessions and longer days- will there be capacity of building and staff without funding increases? By Aug. 18th the directors will be sending their comments so they can be sent collectively. She said all comments will need to be reviewed and responded to and new standards may not be ready until next year at this time. Local Head Start programs will then have to revise their program plans.

Kevin asked if the standards speak to credentialing? Cheryl responded since 1997, Head Start standards have included teacher qualifications and since September 2013, 50% of all teachers in a center based program must have a Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood or related field with proof of specific hours in early childhood. There has been discussion at looking at family service workers and required degrees and possible increase in credentials for Home Visitors. Many times these degreed individuals leave Head Start for the public schools' early childhood classrooms for higher salaries.

V. Early Education Matching Grant Update –

Melanie reported IU is currently wrapping up the year one evaluation and the report should be available in August or September to present to ELAC. Year two we have 21 EEMG grantees – 14 renewals and 7 new grantees. On July 30th we are hosting a

Early Learning Advisory Committee meeting/training for all grantees addressing Family Engagement, contract compliance and other aspects of the grants. Contracts are in execution phase but on schedule.

Carrie asked if evaluation of the children will be followed to kindergarten and funding did not allow for that. Melanie will discuss with Michael as to the feasibility of this in the future since funding has been extended. Carrie also reported one EEMG program who is continuing for year two has expanded their program to offer twice as many slots for 2015-16 serving twice as many children. It has been exciting to see this program grow and increase quality.

VI. On My Way Pre-K Pilot Update

Melanie reported on June 30th we completed family enrollment and we are in the process of finalizing numbers. As of today, there are 2216 children enrolled statewide, including 640 Indy PSP grants. That means we met our 1600 On My Way goal statewide with an additional 600 Indy PSP goal also being met. All pilot counties are serving children; Jackson County has re-opened enrollment as this being their first enrollment, they are experiencing what the other 4 counties experienced in January with community awareness issues and lower uptake rate. The other four counties that participated in January saw a much different scenario with families, as they were more prepared and there was much more awareness for the program and the process was much smoother. Jackson County's enrollment is currently 20 – they had over 100 lottery applications but when eligibility is verified, they are neither income or age eligible or didn't show up for their appointment. The Jackson County team has worked hard to build capacity and outreach to parents and families. Currently Jackson County has 11 approved providers with a capacity of 166 and 2 pending providers with an additional 42 seats. They will continue to take applications through July or until funding has been fully obligated. Online application is available only for Jackson County and will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis.

Melanie reported there are currently 219 approved OMW providers with 23 pending for a total capacity of 4316. This is very exciting because when you raise the quality of a program the quality increases for all children – not just the On My Way Pre-K grantees. Over the last nine months in these 5 counties compared to this year, Level 3 increases are up 27% and Level 4 increases are up 52%. This is a burst of capacity building. Our coaches, raters and partners have done a phenomenal job. There was a question about when eligible parents chose their provider. Melanie explained many parents completed their enrollment, but had until June 30th to complete that provider selection part of the process. There were pending providers on the list and parents could choose these providers knowing if they did not become eligible by June 30th, they would need to choose another provider. Parents may switch providers prior to the beginning of the school year, but cannot switch during the program year.

Kevin asked of the 219 approved providers, do we know how many were actually selected by parents – 163 unique providers have been selected.

Connie commented it is usually very slow in the summer - but with On My Way Pre-K, families are more aware and their program is almost full. Families seem to understand better the importance of early learning and the families understand what a wonderful opportunity this is and are very emotional. Intakes have reported the same reactions from families and some children arrived at eligibility appointment with their backpack on and ready to go to school that day!

There was a question about the Indy PSP program; Melanie explained the vast majority of the Indy PSP are 3 year olds. The way we enrolled and the fact that both programs worked collaboratively with the same eligibility meant Indy PSP enrolled the 3 year olds and the state enrolled 4 year olds with the understanding that once the state met maximum capacity, then additional 4's could go to Indy PSP too.

John Peirce commented on Allen County's experience. He stated that there was a concern that homes would not participate and to date of the 44 approved providers in Allen County, 23 are homes and only one home participated in the January cohort. That one home provider is thrilled to use ISTAR-KR with all her children – not just the one On My Way Pre-K grantee. Also those providers able to participate in the targeted assistance grants were as emotional as the families as to the opportunity afforded them. The Community Foundation was able to provide bridge loans to the homes up front for the targeted assistance grants.

VII. Other Business

The June 30th report was issued to on time to the Governor's office and the legislative council along with the press release – Kevin thanked FSSA for their assistance.

WFYI, a local Indianapolis radio station, reached out to Kevin to invite Amanda and Kevin to do a live one hour radio show yesterday. They talked about the June 30 report release, highlights and next steps. It was recorded as a podcast and is available on the WFYI website. We were very grateful for the opportunity to promote the hard work of ELAC as word is getting out. Thanks to all who participated in the report and to Transform Consulting Group for the graphic design.

Alonzo reported the public radio station recently ran a segment with a licensed home preparing for new children. There is great excitement around the state's investment in improving quality and great public relations momentum!

Melanie reported there was also a piece on Inside Indiana pertaining to Allen County and the business impact; that piece is also available on their website.

Melanie motioned to end the meeting. Alonzo seconded. All approved.

Meeting adjourned at 2:27 pm.

VIII. Next meeting date – Friday, August 14, 2015 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST,
Conference Room # 4