Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC)

Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2014

Present:	Kevin Bain, Tammy Veselsky, Melanie Brizzi, Charlie Geier, Beckie Minglin, Connie Sherman
Absent:	John Burnett, Alonzo Weems
Guests:	Amanda Lopez
Next meeting:	Wednesday, June 11, 2014 from 12-2 p.m. in the Indiana Government Center South Conference Center

1. **Announcements**

   N/A

2. **Discussion**

   1. **Review of Minutes from last meeting, held May 9, 2014:**
      Beckie Minglin moved to approve the minutes. Charlie Geier seconded. The minutes were approved.

   2. **June 30 Report Draft**
      The next statutory responsibility that ELAC must tackle is the June 30 report to the Governor and Legislative Council regarding all ELAC has done since the first Committee meeting last October. ELAC is currently working on the draft with help from Amanda Lopez. Kevin Bain noted that the Report will also include recommendations to the Governor and legislature and that ELAC will need to approve them before the Report is submitted.

      Amanda updated the committee on the Report. The order of topics in the Report will follow the order of ELAC requirements as listed in the statute. The overall goal of the Report is to convey the state of early care and education in Indiana by addressing ELAC progress toward statutory requirements (for example: program recommendations and review and selection process for the Early Education Matching Grant; providing a statewide needs assessment on access to early care and education; formation and work to date of the ELAC workgroups; etc.). The first five pages will be an Executive Summary to make the Report more user-friendly. The Executive Summary will close with details of ELAC's recommendations to the Governor and Legislative council. The remainder of the Report will contain the supplemental details, statistics, and narratives. It was noted that the legislative Summer Study Commission on Prekindergarten and Early Education will be considering a lot of topics reflected in the Report. The Report will also be available to the public.

      Amanda walked through a draft of the recommendations that will be included in the Report. The **_draft_** recommendations are as follows:

      a. Additional funding information is needed at the aggregate level (regarding, for example, the total current public and private funding for program slots; affordability for families; supporting program efforts to improve quality). Public includes state and federal dollars and private includes community investments. The recommendation speaks to the fact that we do not yet know how much money in total is currently being invested in the birth-8 and provider populations.

      b. An alternative pathway to licensure should be developed for public preschools to participate in Paths to QUALITY™ in order to promote provider participation and choice for families. This will be similar to the Voluntary Certification Program for unlicensed registered ministries. Partnerships should be encouraged between public schools and community partners around birth through 8, including partnerships for wrap-

around care, non-traditional hours of care, and kindergarten transitions. It was noted that this recommendation emerged from several of the workgroups.

c. Data from the needs assessment in the Report should be used to identify information gaps and augment data with new collection methods, for use in building informed program, family, and community outreach plans.

d. Indiana should pursue federal grant dollars as appropriate (for example, the Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership grant; the Pre-K Development grant). It was noted that in many cases the existence of ELAC allows Indiana to apply for grants we were not previously eligible for. Melanie Brizzi recommended that this recommendation include "maximizing all funding sources". Charlie Geier noted that the recommendations should also address the need to incentivize private donors to invest in high quality early care and education.

e. A valid and developmentally appropriate statewide kindergarten readiness assessment should be adopted and implemented. This recommendation came from the Evaluation of Child Outcomes workgroup. Charlie Geier noted that other groups throughout Indiana are already working on this topic and recommended that ELAC consider what is being done by those other groups. Melanie Brizzi affirmed the advantages of all workgroups striving to work collaboratively with all existing groups and initiatives and that the Report as a whole should address that philosophy.

f. Families should be incentivized to choose high quality programs and should be provided with information so that they can make the best choice for their families.

g. Indiana's internal staffing capacity to collaborate and coordinate on these initiatives, as well as the support needed to do so, should be identified, informed by the experience of other states. The committee discussed that this recommendation would be a responsibility of ELAC and become part of ongoing discussions.

The Committee was asked for their thoughts, comments, or further recommendations. Charlie Geier recommended that the Report include a statement somewhere regarding Indiana's early learning infrastructure and that ELAC is dedicated to building a high quality infrastructure of early learning for every single child in Indiana.

Charlie also shared the Data Coordination and System Building workgroup's recommendations:

- The Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) combines data from the Department of Workforce Development, the Department of Education, and the higher education system; the Data Coordination workgroup recommends that Early Learning data be included in this system. This recommendation is tied to the vision outlined in Indiana's 2013 Race to the Top application.

- Privacy issues and law must be at the forefront in all data policy regarding early learning and early learners.

- Data regarding student *and* program outcomes should be collected and both should be linked in some capacity.

- There is a need for clarity in terms of policy objectives and goals for coordinated data systems. Indiana should follow best practices for data collection and coordination that have already been established by other groups at the national level.

Kevin Bain requested that ELAC members send any further recommendations to Amanda. The Report, including the recommendations, will be sent out for review. ELAC agreed to respond and vote on the recommendations via email.

3. **Workgroup Documents Review**

   Kevin Bain noted that the seven ELAC workgroups have started using Wiggio for their project management. The virtual space includes templates and resources and provides an effective way for workgroup members to communicate.

   Kevin explained that the next steps include establishing a Guiding Team (terminology from the Institute of Coalition Building) to meet and discuss issues that arise during the course of workgroup meetings in order to ensure workgroup efficiency and alignment of objectives.

4. **Workgroup Updates**

   Kevin noted that workgroup updates will become a regular part of ELAC meetings. A template was created so that each workgroup can capture attendance, key topics discussed, key issues raised, and key action steps. A co-chair from each workgroup will attend each ELAC meeting to report back, using the template as a framework. A workgroup member or Amanda and her team can report out in the event that a co-chair is unavailable.

   a. Child Development and Well Being (Connie Sherman): Connie reported that this workgroup met on May 15 and has scheduled a second meeting. The first topic discussed was defining kindergarten readiness. The group agreed that a child health component should be included. The workgroup is looking at how other states have defined kindergarten readiness; the seven domains of readiness as defined within Race to the Top; as well as Michael Conn-Powers' work with First Steps, ISTAR-KR, and the Early Education Matching Grant. The workgroup's action steps include reviewing the early learning goals within FOUNDATIONS, looking at other states' definitions, and having each member draft 3 sentences defining kindergarten readiness.

   b. Family Engagement: The co-chairs were not able to attend the 6/11/14 ELAC meeting. However, ELAC members Beckie Minglin and Melanie Brizzi attended the Family Engagement workgroup meeting and were able to report on their behalf. The workgroup touched on the basics of family engagement and have planned at their next meeting to receive a presentation on the Head Start family and community engagement model. The workgroup agrees that a recommendation for evaluating family engagement is needed but is still in the stages of determining how to get consensus on that recommendation. Melanie noted that the current evaluation of Paths to QUALITY being done by Purdue University should give the group an idea of what the evaluation of family engagement could look like. The family engagement component of Purdue's current evaluation was developed by a workgroup established last year to look at evidence-based best practice in determining a potential framework for Indiana's family engagement approach.

   c. Professional and Workforce Development (Dianna Wallace): Dianna reported that the Professional and Workforce Development workgroup would be meeting next week. The group provided some baseline data to Amanda for the June 30th Report. At their next meeting the workgroup will identify additional questions they want to answer, and make recommendations for consideration in the Report.

   d. Provider Participation and Advancement (Melanie Brizzi): Melanie reported that the Provider Participation and Advancement workgroup discussed that in light of HB 1004, the alternative pathway to licensure for public schools is a high priority. The co-chair of this workgroup is Katherine Raasch from MSD of Wayne Township. The workgroup began to look at the Paths to QUALITY Standards compared to what is already being done in public schools as a way to eliminate duplication where possible. The group is identifying what barriers exist and Dana Jones from the Department of Education is working with the Paths to QUALITY Policy Committee to iron out the more specific details of an alternative pathway.

   e. Funding Streams: The co-chairs were unable to attend the 6/11/14 ELAC meeting. Amanda reported that many of the June 30th Report recommendations on funding came from this workgroup. She noted that co-

chair James Betley from the Center for Education and Career Innovation provided a draft memo of the funding sources that were currently available. The workgroup sent a survey to the Indiana Philanthropy Alliance and the Indiana Association of United Ways to get a sense of what private funding currently exists. The next step will be analyzing the data from the survey.

f. Data Coordination and System Building (Charlie Geier): Charlie reported that the Data Coordination workgroup held its second meeting and discussed the importance of privacy and trust in data collection and coordination / avoiding duplication of efforts. He noted that the group also discussed the role of the Data Coordination group as a whole—is their role to coordinate data informing the work of ELAC Workgroups or of data collection/coordination within Indiana as a whole, or both? The group was given an assignment to look at the data collection tools within their own agencies in order to get a better idea of what currently exists and lay down a baseline.

g. Evaluation of Child Outcomes (Kevin Bain): Kevin reported that this workgroup has not met since the last ELAC meeting. The number one deliverable for this workgroup is to recommend a tool or a set of tools to use for the kindergarten readiness assessment that will feed into the PreK Pilot longitudinal study. Kevin reported that each individual workgroup member used a rubric to look at the landscape of available tests and score them based on cost, validity, standardization, training required, etc. At the next meeting the workgroup will look at the tools and rubrics together and try to come to consensus on finalists to be evaluated further. They will be making a recommendation for a tool or set of tools in August. Kevin noted that the challenge is thinking not only about what is ideal but also what is practical in terms of ongoing training, cost, etc. Melanie Brizzi noted that the group should be careful about how they are defining the success of early learning intervention (for example: aggregate/pass-fail versus whether the program prepared the individual child optimally for that child's development).

5. **Early Education Matching Grant Update**
    Melanie Brizzi updated the committee on the status of the Early Education Matching Grant. FSSA is in the process of executing agreements between the State and the Grantees. FSSA has started providing training to Grantees around family recruitment and enrollment and using ISTAR-KR. It was noted that there will be a second wave of funding but the exact amount will not be determined until the net remaining from the first wave is identified. There is an ongoing discussion of aligning the EEMG with the PreK Pilot in order to ensure consistency and effectiveness across both.

6. **2014 Legislative Update: HEA 1004**
    FSSA is administering both the EEMG and the 5-county PreK Pilot established by HEA 1004. The first task for the PreK Pilot is to identify the 5 counties. Melanie Brizzi reported that FSSA has formed an advisory group that includes higher education representatives, researchers, early learning experts, business representatives, representatives from philanthropic organizations, the Department of Education, and Head Start. The group has narrowed it down to 18 potential counties based on the number of children who met the eligibility criteria; the percentage of children ages birth to 5 living in the county; the resources available in the county and the number of children not being served; as well as the capacity of existing providers in that county for enrolling more children. Tomorrow FSSA is hosting a webinar for the 18 counties. The counties have been asked to submit a Statement of County Readiness. Melanie noted that counties demonstrating readiness by January 2015 can do early implementation, but otherwise FSSA is looking at an implementation date of July 2015. More information about the PreK Pilot can be found on the FSSA homepage under "Pre-K Pilot Program" (http://www.in.gov/fssa/4899.htm).

7. **Other Business**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:42 p.m.