

Early Learning Advisory Committee
Minutes
April 15, 2016
Government Center – Conference Room 1

Present:

Kevin Bain
Robin Atkins
M. Cindy Frey
Christopher Stokes
Connie Sherman

Guests:

Nicole Norvell
Nathan Williamson
Michael Conn-Powers
John Peirce
Lacey Kottkamp
Ted Maple
Hanan Osman

I. Call to Order

Kevin Bain, ELAC Chairman

Introduction of Nathan Williamson, IDOE, Director of Early Learning and Intervention; and Nicole Norvell, FSSA, Director of Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning. We look forward to getting them officially appointed to ELAC.

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 month or quarter. They also identify and inform ELAC of any upcoming recommendations for future ELAC meetings to assist in planning the agenda.

1. Child Development and Well-Being

Connie Sherman, Co-Chair

- Connie shared that the group started work on bringing [Help Me GROW](#) to Indiana and has engaged multiple partners, including the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH). ISDH applied for a federal grant that could help expedite the work. Potential pilot communities for this initiative have been discussed, as well as sending an Indiana representative to the national Help Me GROW conference in May.
- Connie will follow up with Nicole Norvell on getting a First Steps representative at the table to engage in the work.

- Kevin Bain asked about the timeline of the federal grant, and Connie noted that the state is supposed to hear back this summer.

2. Data Coordination and Systems Integration

Charlie Geier, Co-Chair

- Charlie shared that there has been great participation in this workgroup, and the group will be adding a Purdue representative next month.
- The workgroup's 2016 Work Plan is complete through June and will be revised for the second half of year.
- The workgroup provided feedback on INK's "Data Dictionary" and corrected inaccuracies.
- The workgroup reviewed the list of data for the annual report and discussed ways to more effectively and efficiently collect the data, the creation of local county dashboards, the addition of new data points such as infant/toddler, and other data gaps. Will begin work on the community level dashboards.
- Dr. Michael Conn-Powers provided an update on the EEMG Year 2 Evaluation at the April workgroup meeting.
- A presentation from Purdue on On My Way Pre-K and PTQ evaluations is scheduled for May workgroup meeting.
- Kevin Bain offered to introduce workgroup co-chairs to Elliot Regenstein from Illinois, who is willing to share some best practices from their state's effort to align a longitudinal data system.

3. Provider Participation and Advancement

Lacey Kottkamp, Workgroup Representative

- Over the past several months, the PPA workgroup has had a lot of discussion around Indiana's Systems of Care (SOC) across the state. Christina Commons and Jayme Whitaker from DMHA joined the workgroup meeting to give an overview of SOC and opportunities to work together.
- They have been working on creating a map that identifies the coalitions organized around early learning in the state. This map will be a living, breathing document and will continue to be updated as additional groups are identified.
- A subcommittee has formed and is working on a Coalition Building Framework and toolkit for community coalitions. One item in the toolkit will be a self-assessment and will have the four "levels" similar to the Family Engagement self-assessment.
- Kevin Bain shared that he likes aligning the language in the self-assessment tool with the language already being used in the ELAC Family Engagement Toolkit.
- Robin Atkins asked if the workgroup is still looking for coalitions and/or is there a count of how many are out there yet? The group is still looking. Head Start (HS) representation in local coalitions is an identified gap. Robin offered to help locate HS organizations across the state and their involvement in coalitions.
- John Peirce shared that *health* is a very important factor in early learning, and perhaps local coalitions are already created around this issue too.

4. Evaluation of Child Outcomes

Kevin Bain, Co-Chair

- Kevin Bain shared that this workgroup is scheduled to meet at the end of April. The group plans to establish baselines to track outcomes across various early childhood arenas and will meet with other workgroups in the near future. A joint meeting is already scheduled with the Family Engagement workgroup to talk about baselines for family outcomes and how to measure those.
- The workgroup remains interested in recommending a statewide KEA/KRA; they have continued the dialogue about KRAs and what tools might lend themselves to use statewide. The potential to have an *aggregate level* statewide assessment rather than at the individual or classroom level was also discussed.
- Kevin summarized the results of a survey completed on current Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) practices of Indiana school corporations. The Evaluation Workgroup, via the Indiana Department of Education, contacted all public school districts and charter schools. There were a total of 227 responses with 76 counties represented. Out of the 289 total public school corporations in Indiana, 139 responded, which is close to a 50% response rate! Some findings include:
 - Most school corporations administer their assessments in the Spring during Kindergarten “round up.”
 - Majority of assessments were locally developed—taking the form of a “checklist” instead of an assessment that could be validated or standardized.
- Cindy Frey asked if these findings were a surprise. Kevin said they were not.
- Chris Stokes asked why the workgroup thinks this was this the case? Kevin suggested probably due to expense more than anything. Chris said that a free assessment tool needs to be provided and shared statewide.
- Robin Atkins asked if the domains assessed through the “homegrown” assessments were comparable? Language and Math were the most common areas assessed.
- Kevin said that not having critical mass on an off-the-shelf tool gives ELAC the latitude to try and push for a reliable and validated statewide assessment.
- The Statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Survey Summary will be uploaded to the ELAC website under the Resources tab.

5. Family Engagement

John Peirce, Co-Chair

- John shared that Katie Herron with Indiana University has accepted the role of Family Engagement workgroup co-chair to replace Chris Whitmire.
- This workgroup finalized their logic model and work plan for 2016 with three focus areas: (1) establishing a current state baseline of family engagement including a survey of best practices, (2) developing a family friendly version of the early learning Foundations, and (3) working with partners to identify a metric for measuring unmet need for evidence-based home visiting for the state and each county in the state.

- Three subcommittees have been formed to tackle these focus areas and will meet prior to next workgroup meeting to discuss what is wanted to learn and measure about family engagement to support continuous improvement.

6. Funding Streams

Ted Maple, Co-Chair

- Ted Maple shared that Melissa Manlove with the Indiana Philanthropy Association has accepted the role of Funding Streams workgroup co-chair to replace Joe Taylor.
- This workgroup received and discussed feedback on the 2015 Funding Memo from a small group of stakeholders that will help to inform the creation of the 2016 Funding Memo. The 2016 Funding Memo will focus primarily on preschool (three- and four-year-olds) funding this time. The goal is to release the memo in August.
- During April's meeting, the workgroup reviewed the Cost of Preschool Quality (CPQ) tool that is being piloted in Indiana through the Center for Evaluating Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO). The CPQ tool has the ability to incorporate data from a variety of sources to help users understand all the costs associated with scaling a state public preschool program. The CPQ tool can "test" different scenarios by comparing quality standards, program dosage, location, etc. The workgroup began by testing a scenario with expanding the current On My Way Pre-K and Indy PSP programs to 50% of the eligible population.
- Kevin asked how the workgroup sees the output of the CPQ tool being used? The information may be used by advocates, policymakers, and legislators to make informed decisions about scaling-up preschool to the state level.
- Indiana is one of a handful of states to be piloting this cost-modeling tool.
- The workgroup is looking at some additional scenarios to run with the tool, such as different quality indicators and federal poverty levels.

7. Workforce and Professional Development

Hanan Osman, Workgroup Representative

- Hanan shared that this workgroup will present the revised Indiana Early Childhood and Out of School Learning Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKCs) for the workforce and the Career Pathway to ELAC for adoption in June.
- The Higher ED Forum is drafting a response to the results of the Higher Ed Inventory study completed by UC Berkeley in 2015. A final draft and strategic plan will be ready in September.
- Two sub-committees were identified focused on the following:
 - 1) Recruiting, retaining, and rewarding competent early learning workforce.
 - 2) Gather data about the workforce.
- Early Learning Indiana and Ball State are undertaking a workforce compensation parity study by comparing outcomes of the T.E.A.C.H. program and ECE pay in other states. They will help to support and inform the work.
- This workgroup will help the Funding Streams workgroup by weighing in on the CPQ tool in terms of the cost to have BA degrees in high quality programs.

- Robin Atkins asked why Indiana does not link compensation to the Career Pathway.
- Regarding high turnover in the ECE field, Chris Stokes asked where do those staff members end up going to work when they leave the field? Hanan said that they go where they can make more money, and sometimes to entirely different professions. Some will go to Head Start programs or public schools that pay more, or decide to be administrators or directors because of higher pay and benefits.
- Chris recommended researching how private organizations addressed this same issue in 2008. There were some research projects in the private sector done to see how to keep people in positions where they aren't compensated very well and all other considerations seem dire. Chris Stokes offered to connect the workgroup with these studies.

III. ELAC Updates

Kevin Bain, Chairman

1. Annual Report

- The 2016 Annual Report has been released and is available on the ELAC website!
- It features a dashboard that captures key indicators and baseline data to demonstrate progress.
- Kevin encouraged sharing the report with others in your network and encourage its use.
- It has been sent to the Governor's office and Legislative Council.

2. Coalition Summit

- June 7th in Muncie: Indiana Summit on Economic Development and Early Learning Coalitions. The agenda is being finalized.
- John Pepper has been confirmed as the keynote speaker; former CEO of Procter and Gamble.
- Early Learning Indiana is hosting a special prek advocacy training day on June 8th.

IV. Early Education Matching Grant (EEMG)

1. Presentation on Mid-Year Report

Dr. Michael Conn-Powers, Indiana University

- Provided a mid-year update on the EEMG program. Some of the key highlights include the following:
 - There are 366 children are enrolled as of today.
 - Fifty-one percent of children had no prior experience with early education.
 - Nineteen programs served anywhere from 4 to 92 children each.
 - Six new programs were added this school year!
 - Forty-one classrooms served an average of 8 children.
 - Five teachers have turned over as of February 2016.
 - All children are at 100% poverty level.

- The evaluation is assessing child's growth in receptive language, concept development, behavior and social skills.
- The new social behavior scale has a family version and a teacher version to get two perspectives. Michael shared the pre-scores were rated differently for teachers and parents.
- John Peirce asked about the discrepancies between how families and teachers rate problem behavior: Is it because children behave better in class than at home, or because of the perception of what constitutes bad behavior? Michael responded that the issues of perception are removed somewhat when the checklist is used in this scale. The notion of perception is lost through the tool; therefore, the behavior issues are likely attributed to behavior at home vs. behavior at school.
- Erin Kissling asked at what point did families and teachers complete the survey? Michael responded that they were completed after the first month of the school year.
- Nathan Williamson asked what the instructional support looks like regarding the CLASS instrument that assess teacher-child interaction? Michael responded that "instructional support" focuses on verbal interactions that build critical thinking skills and problem solving. It is not child-driven. Using this concept, teachers ask a lot of questions, use bigger words, ask kids to solve problems and think critically about their answers. Basically, there is a lot of intent and teacher interaction. The goal is to proactively support teachers to embed more of these practices in the classroom. Next year, the CLASS assessment will be done at the beginning of year to be able to give feedback to teachers sooner.
- Michael noted that there has been a higher rate of absenteeism among some students. When children miss 10% or more school days, outcomes start to suffer. In this cohort of EEMG students, an average of 29% have been absent 10% or more of the time. Charlie Geier asked if the data had been analyzed to determine factors for why this attendance issue is occurring? Michael replied, yes, and there a lot of factors to consider. For example: Families who have children in pre-K for the first time, and/or a family's structure tend to make a difference on absenteeism. Katie Herron, a member of the IU Evaluation Team, is going talk to programs about how to deal with chronic absenteeism.
- Michael noted that the final cohort 2 evaluations will be completed in April and May.

2. Early Education Matching Grant

Nicole Norvell, Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning (OECOSL)

- Twenty new early learning programs in 18 counties have been selected to receive Early Education Matching Grants (EEMG) for 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years!
- \$3.2 million will be awarded to serve approximately 1,200 children in the next two school years.
- OECOSL will use the mid-year evaluation updates to make adjustments along the way for cohorts 3 & 4.

- John Peirce asked if the Paths To Quality coaches have been given the information from Michael's report yet? Nicole replied no.
- Nicole noted that marketing strategies need to align better with the two pre-k pilot programs. For example, OMY Pre-K gets marketed in many different ways, but the EEMG program isn't marketed in the same way and is instead often left up to the selected grantee to market. There are more applicants than seats for OMY, yet we can't fill all of the available seats for EEMG.

V. On My Way Pre-K Pilot

Nicole Norvell, Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning

- The lottery for the children selected for the 2016-17 school year is complete!
- Roughly the same number of families applied this year as last year.
- We did a better job of educating families this year on who was eligible, which resulted in more applications that did not get turned down.
- This weekend is the first call-in weekend for intake agents to meet with families who have been selected.
- Kevin asked when do you anticipate having final counts of enrollment? Nicole said by the end of May.

VI. Pre-K Expansion Planning

Kent Mitchell and Karen Ruprecht, Early Learning Indiana

- Kent shared that Early Learning Indiana (ELI) believes Indiana is ready for a large-scale expansion of pre-K. ELI has solicited feedback from stakeholders across the state to discuss expansion of pre-k and wanted to share that feedback with ELAC.
- Karen shared feedback from stakeholders that have identified three key components of pre-k:
 1. Program Requirements
 - How do we determine eligibility (i.e. need-based, etc.)?
 - Engaged in a robust conversation about teacher education and compensation levels
 - Discussed deeper family engagement requirements
 2. Implementation
 - Curriculum selection
 - Child assessments and what tool(s) to use
 - Program accountability beyond attendance
 - Quality level in classrooms
 3. Communication
 - Goal is to develop a white paper about why this is important and why do it now, rather than wait longer.
- Kent shared that ELI will be partnering with United Way of Central Indiana for advocacy to move forward with this in communities. The 4 Key pre-K expansion field strategies are:
 1. Showcase high quality pre-K and illustrate Indiana's readiness.
 2. Secure endorsements of plan and activate local champions.
 3. Get law makers on record for support.

4. Activate families as advocates. (Never underestimate the power of families as champions and advocates for their children!)

VII. Policy Updates

1. Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) State Plan Implementation Update

Nicole Norvell, Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning

- Decisions are still being made with regard to the best route for plan implementation.
- Meetings will be held across the state to discuss rules prior to starting official promulgation process.
- A *Quality Team* has been working hard on health and safety training and tracking that training, and how providers can track it more efficiently.
- There are many trainings that must be developed and rolled out.
- Getting systems in place behind the new policies to be able to implement them is one of the biggest challenges.

2. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Nathan Williamson, Indiana Department of Education

- Most of the law will not be official until July of 2017.
- A major theme of ESSA is the new flexibility that states and local school systems will have.
- ESSA contains language that speaks to transitions.
- New funding streams are being found that can be used to support early learning!

3. Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP)

Robin Atkins, Indiana Head Start State Collaboration Office

- The goal of this partnership grant is to expand high quality care for infants and toddlers to support working families by partnering Early Head Start and Child Care programs and blending two funding streams: Early Head Start and CCDF vouchers.
- Indiana Head Start State Collaboration Office is hosting a webinar on April 21 to gauge interest in applying for the grant. Four current Indiana grantees will be on the call and speak about their EHS-CCP experience.
- The federal Office of Head Start plans to release the RFP in June.

There is NO May ELAC meeting. Next full meeting will be Friday, June 3, 2016 at 1:00pm.

Motion to adjourn.