



Present:

Tonia Carriger, Betsy Delgado, Mary Gardner, Dr. Nancy Holsapple, Nicole Norvell, Christopher Stokes, Kerri Wortinger

1. Call to Order

- Betsy called the meeting to order at 1:03pm.

2. Approve February Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve: All ayes

3. Impact of COVID-19 on Indiana Early Childhood Education

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

- 86.99% of child care programs are open (as of today)
- 577 programs remain temporarily closed
 - 203 centers
 - 213 homes
 - 143 ministries
 - 18 exempt programs
- Across the state, the demand is still down. There is some continued fear about returning to care. Those are numbers we'll continue to watch to know how many facilities we need to meet demand.
- Temporary Assistance Grants
 - 10 grant rounds that paid out over \$61 million
 - Temporary Assistance Grants Future: Funding is moving to a child care closure assistance grant
- Child Care Closure Assistance Grant
 - Assistance is available if a program has closed due to a confirmed COVID-19 case.
 - Grants are awarded to programs for the purpose of continuing to regularly pay staff and cover lost revenue from children who are funded through private pay/cash pay.
 - This grant does not provide assistance to providers for CCDF/OMWPK funded children. These children should be covered by families' personal days.
 - Eligibility Criteria:
 - Providers must have been temporarily closed because of a confirmed COVID-19 case of a person affiliated with the facility.



- Providers must be eligible to receive CCDF
- For purposes of this grant, total grant awards will be capped at \$20,000 for a two-week period.
- #INCares About Child Care
 - Leveraging Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) dollars for Indiana child care programs via the Indiana Child Care Resource & Referral Network (CCR&Rs)
 - Programs receiving the grant dollars can use the award for the following expenses:
 - Equipment
 - Supplies/materials to assist with cleaning, safety, or food service
 - Staffing to assist with additional cleaning or to maintain smaller ratios
 - Professional services to assist with cleaning or installation of requested items
 - Coming to your CCR&R at the end of August

Question from Betsy: We have greatly appreciated the support. There have been multiple situations that you can't really anticipate, and each has been unique. Being able to use these resources with the flexibility has been helpful.

Response from Nicole: We have felt grateful to be able to administer these funds. Our group has been large to approve applications and manually enter these payments every two weeks. Having the opportunity to stay in touch with the provider base has been great through this, and we're looking at how to continue to do that and be some level of support.

Comment from Kerri: To Nicole and team, I'm thankful as a provider that they're listening.

Response from Nicole: I talked with the last 10 programs that have had to close, to collect some data for the Secretary. Talking to them was extremely powerful and powerful for the Secretary as well, to share their experiences. It's been great that providers have been willing to share with us.

Response from Betsy: We continue to talk to our folks that have stayed open as well.

4. COVID Impact on School-Age Child Care Programs and Resources Available

Sara Beanblossom, Indiana Afterschool Network

- Who is IAN?
 - Mission: We mobilize people, organizations, and communities to connect afterschool and summer programs with the support they need to create positive youth outcomes for inspiring futures.
 - Vision: Indiana is a place where all K-12 children and youth have access to high quality learning opportunities beyond the school day that prepare them for success in education, careers and life.



- Our History
 - 3 focus areas: quality, access, advocacy
 - Key funders: Lilly Endowment, IDOE, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
 - Network: As a 501c3, we have thousands of partners across the fields of education, youth development, business, government, faith-based, and community organizations in Indiana and nationally.
- Connections to School Age Audience
 - CCDF vouchers
 - 21st Century
 - Serve children often above 5 or 6 years old
- Summer of 2020
 - Based on limited polling and word of mouth, Indiana school age programs are:
 - Serving about 25% of their students on average
 - Two-thirds of these are being served virtually
 - They've been providing virtual programming, programming for children of first responders or essential workers, providing meals, and checking in with families.
- Concerns of Programs
 - Safety, and what regulations will do to the programs
 - Trauma
 - Losing touch with students in need
 - Loss of funding, the future of their programs
 - Communications with schools and key stakeholders
 - Lack of certainty about reopening
- Program Needs
 - Getting guidance on health and safety for students and staff
 - More online resources and more student access to technology
 - Finding and paying for protective equipment and cleaning
 - Better guidance to help them plan for the future
- What IAN Has Been Doing to Support Programs
 - Advocating to funders, school leaders, and policymakers around collective solutions and supports
 - Convening regularly with Mott Network and IDOE 21CCLC staff to gather needs and concerns of providers
 - Creating a statewide communications campaign – help providers communicate and work with their communities around solutions
 - Creating, collecting and distributing responsive tools and trainings for the “new” provider landscape



- Convening programs and stakeholders to share resources and provide spaces to collectively problem solve
- Providing reduced cost access to the Indiana Academy on Out-of-School Learning – so people can participate in professional development
- Recommendations for Supporting Programs
 - Increased communications between programs and community leaders around collaborative solutions for quality care and student support
 - Collective strategy to monitor which programs are available and their capacity
 - Continued and improved information sharing around program guidance and resources
 - Recognition of the role that out-of-school time providers can play in Indiana right now

5. Feedback from Early Childhood Programs on Impact of COVID

Dianna Wallace, Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children (INAEYC)

- Tammy Dant, South Bend Provider, Director at Apple Tree
 - 20 staff, and over 100 children ages 6 weeks to 12 years
 - 25% first responders and 50% deemed essential workers
 - Attendance and revenue fell by 75% since March and cost of supplies has increased (and availability has decreased)
 - Started supporting e-learning in March and will continue that with this school year. Making sure children have access to internet is the largest hurdle.
 - We have been able to apply for multiple grants to be able to make it through.
 - We're meeting with other directors on what they will need to do to open back up.

Question from Nicole: Can you talk more about your partnership with your local schools?

Response from Tammy: They have buses with internet that's being sent out to neighborhoods. We have internet, but we can't support 40 children. I've been working with the school district to get a bus to be able to support them.

Question from Nicole: Are they doing only e-learning or a hybrid model or something else?

Response from Tammy: We are doing only e-learning, and at this point won't go back in person until at least October 5th.

- Christine Garza, Indianapolis, Early Learning Indiana (manages Day Early Learning and Head Start Child Care Partnership)
 - All centers are Level 4 and 8 of 9 have remained open during the duration of the stay at home order. We created an additional center for school-aged children with IU Health and worked to provide services for first responders.



- New normal is masks, temperatures, and social distancing.
- We continue to be innovative to meet the health and safety requirements.
- It has been challenging to ask families to stay out of the building, but we've worked to be innovative by reaching out to them virtually and having activities at the drop-off door.
- We have had 10 temporary closures throughout our system. None of the positive cases have transmitted through the centers. We originally would close the whole center, and now we can close just one classroom if needed.
- We're thankful for the temporary assistance grants from FSSA and philanthropic funders. We have maintained all 275 staff. We know that these supports are scheduled to end, and we're monitoring that.
- We took the down time to launch some professional development for our teachers and some others across the state.
- Our greatest need is how to partner with families and work with them on transitions to Kindergarten. We're looking for ways to continue to meet the needs of our families moving forward.

Comment from Nicole: It's awesome that you shared that even though you had a positive case, it didn't result in massive spread in your centers. It's really important for people to listen to and hear that the procedures in place are working to mitigate the spread.

Question from general public: How are you helping with those Kindergarten transitions?

Response from Christine: We haven't landed on an answer. We're working on having good relationships with local entities that are doing school-age care. We're not positioned to do Kindergarten. So we continue to look at this on how to help parents find resources to help them transition (AYS, school districts, etc.). We'll still be able to reach out to our schools if they want to talk about any of our children.

- Jamie Madigan, Evansville, USI Early Learning Center
 - The center was a nationally accredited program for early learning and model university lab school at the University of Southern Indiana.
 - As of March 16th, children were no longer sent to campus.
 - We used grants to pay staff from March through June.
 - Our center was closed permanently at the end of June.
 - We are the second nationally accredited center to be closed in our county in 9 months, and we are worried there may be more closures in the future.
 - I had a TEACH scholarship to help go to school as a nontraditional student while working as an early childhood provider.



6. Indiana Recruitment and Retention Grants – Response to COVID

Dianna Wallace and Kara Ketter, Indiana AEYC

- Gratitude to Governor, Governor’s Council, and OECOSL for continuing to listen
- INAEYC’s mission is promoting high-quality learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.
- Temporary Early Childhood Employee Recruitment and Retention Grant
 - State of Indiana recognizes the profound and essential work of child care professionals, especially during this public health emergency.
 - In recognition of this effort, the OECOSL in cooperation with IAEYC provided these grants starting at beginning of June.
- Grant Criteria
 - Open with children present or plan to be open on/or before June 14th, 2020 for the purpose of recruiting and retaining employees (full or part-time) in the state of Indiana.
 - An Indiana licensed or registered early childhood program in good standing with OECOSL.
- Grant Assistance
 - \$300 per position to be recruited. Intended to support the cost of bringing new team member into the program (cost to market open position, interview, background checks, mandated trainings, etc.)
 - \$300 for each full-time employee and \$150 for each part-time employee to be retained
- Outcomes
 - 1,182 total submissions
 - 773 total approved submissions (unique programs)
 - 1,215 total early childhood employees recruited
 - 3,875 total early childhood employees retained
 - Grants awarded to 80 counties
 - \$1,527,000 awarded
 - 138 withdrawn submissions (were ineligible, duplicate submission, etc.)
 - 62 submissions were declined due to lack of funding – hit funding cap
 - 209 submissions were declined for other reasons – duplicate, ineligible, submission incomplete

Comment from Nicole: Dianna came to us to repurpose funds to meet the need in the field. Grateful that she and her team were willing to be flexible and meet the need.



Comment from Dianna: We're stuck on implementation. We're waiting for the money to be released so we can distribute the checks.

Question from general public: We were unable to hire in June. Will we still be able to use the funds when we get them? How will we receive the funds?

Response from Dianna: There will be follow up calls and emails from our staff to these programs about what the status of the funds are. You will still be able to use those funds. Programs will receive a hardcopy check and communication through email when that check will be put in the mail and coming to you.

7. Come Back Stronger Fund – Strengthening Early Learning's Response to COVID

Maureen Weber, Early Learning Indiana

- Supported by \$15 million grant from the Lilly Endowment to reinforce Indiana's supply of child care
- Support types: Fund is to support providers to acquire what is required to continue or resume operations and adapt to COVID-19 challenges
- Eligibility Criteria and Award Levels
 - A licensed or registered center, ministry or family child care home in the state of Indiana and in good standing
 - Operating as a Paths to QUALITY (PTQ) Level 3 or 4, or a Level 2 with a demonstrated commitment to achieving a higher level of program quality
 - Serving children ages 0-5
 - Particular favor to those serving vulnerable populations
- Activating the System to Support to Get the Message Out
 - OECOSL
 - CCR&Rs
 - Spark Learning Lab
 - INAEYC
 - Community-based partners (United Ways, community foundations, K-12 partners, etc.)
 - Business and economic development partners
- Trending Now...
 - Additional supports with how to speak with families and build family confidence in returning to care
 - Identified ongoing need for support around core operations and business principles



- Additional opportunities to reinforce seats that we have and build new as post-COVID landscape comes into focus
- Outcomes
 - Awarded just under 1,000 providers with grants (about 2/3 of the number we're looking to award)
 - Have awarded \$12.5 million
 - Have awarded to providers in 79 counties
- Final Call for Submissions
 - Additional dollars are available, and submissions are due Friday, August 14th
- Cindy Bridges, Indianapolis, Little Duckling Daycare
 - We're appreciative of the grant we were awarded. We serve families in the 46218 zip code. It is important to show families that children are safe and healthy in our care.
 - We used the funds for equipment, supplies, and professional services. Professional services we brought in were mental health services for our staff. It can be stressful to care for the children of others on a day-to-day basis. With a pandemic on top of that, it is even more stressful. Families were seeing positive cases in their own families and losing family members to COVID.
 - The mental health professional helped them with their mental health as well as short-term and long-term goals. Each staff gets a minimum of 3 sessions, and we had a group session to express our needs at work and home.
 - Purchased equipment and supplies – children love sensory activities, but it has been a challenge with the pandemic. We purchased sensory materials for each child so they can have their own and wouldn't share with others to avoid cross-contamination.
 - We purchased additional supplies to make sure we're transporting food safely, such as lunch containers with lids on top and hot boxes to keep food warm. We also installed plexiglass partitions in the bathrooms to separate children as they wash their hands.

Comment from Nicole: I am feverishly typing to share your experience with our Director of Mental Health. He will be excited to learn about that, and it's super important that we don't ignore mental health right now.

- Lori Bolt, Lafayette
 - We did not have to close our center, but we took in the children of essential workers from another center that did close. Investors purchased the closed center which is being leased to us. We are using funds to make the center meet PTQ



requirements as well as meet the safety needs for COVID-19. We're hoping to accept vouchers at the new location, which it did not before. There will be 158 seats, and we already have a waitlist for that center.

- The current center is PTQ Level 3, and we hope to put this new center on this path to a high-quality rating.

Comment from Betsy: We did a needs assessment of our students, and their number one need was mental health. So Cindy, you were ahead of the curve. Great work from Lori and Maureen as well.

8. ELAC Annual Report

Kim Hodge, Chair of Data Coordination and System Integration Workgroup

- 2020 Annual Report Communications Update
 - July 9th – The 2020 Annual Report and interactive dashboard were released as well as an executive summary, which was new this year.
 - Communication Highlights
 - Emails sent to over 600 contacts: ELAC members, partners, government agencies, community agencies
 - 41% email open rate (above industry standard)
 - Expected the response to be a little low due to a summer release, but there has been additional interest which we think may be due to the heightened interest in child care due to COVID-19.
 - Over 550 views on the 2020 interactive dashboard
 - Several news story highlights
- 2021 Annual Report Update
 - Shortened timeline
 - Goal is to finalize the report at the November 2020 meeting, in time for the next budget session
 - Focus on COVID-19 response and implications for the industry
 - Qualitative/anecdotal data
 - Impact stories
 - Report Data Requests
 - Department of Workforce Development
 - Indiana Department of Education
 - FSSA OECOSL
 - Early Learning Indiana
 - Indiana AEYC
 - Looking to tell the story as of the end of June 2020
 - Report Timeline



- Workgroup will meet in September to review findings and draft of report
- Finalize report in October with the workgroup
- Report approved by the Committee in November
- Next Steps
 - Feedback or questions – feel free to use the contact email on the ELAC website or email me directly at khodge@indianaspark.com
 - Join our workgroup!
 - We want to collect impact stories. Please share directly to me, or you can send them to the TCG team.

Comment from Betsy: I want to talk about the two reports. My thoughts are on what are we going to do and where are we going to go to advocate for early learning. We can leverage both the 2020 and 2021 reports in this effort. I've been on a couple of different meetings to talk about this. How do we use these reports to advocate for early learning so we can see more families thrive in Indiana? A concise document to share with our legislators is really important. COVID has brought forward a lot of our strengths as well as some things we're not doing as well as we wish we could.

Comment from Betsy: I want to seek input on how to use these two reports in the coming budget session.

9. Better Together Grant Project

Megan McKinney-Cooper, Jump IN for Healthy Kids; Charlie Geier, Shine Early Learning; Mike Bachman, SPARK Learning Lab

- Jump IN for Healthy Kids has been around for 6 years to stem the tide of childhood overweight and obesity. The research shows if we can create healthier impacts in early childhood, then it can establish healthy habits from the beginning.
- For the last 6 years, Jump IN for Healthy Kids has been partnering with Early Learning Indiana (ELI) to train providers on best practices to use in their centers.
- Prevalence of obesity is high in Indiana, including among children under age 6.
- Impact and Sustainability in Indiana
 - We've found through evaluation that the program created with ELI works. It is evidence-based and continues to show that it works.
- Better Together Program
 - New, just awarded funding by the Nemours Health System
 - Primary partner in executing this is SPARK
- Better Together Objectives



- Collaboratives made up of child care providers to participate in year-long training to integrate best practices into individual centers. (3 collaboratives this year and 3 collaboratives next year – will impact 75 providers each year)
- Integration of evidence-based resources into new technical assistance and coaching methodology available to all programs statewide (not just those participating in the collaboratives).
- Convene a statewide stakeholder group to integrate selections from the CDC's early childhood Spectrum of Opportunities statewide.
- Spectrum of Opportunities
 - Hoping to select two of these where we can make a real impact
- Statewide Stakeholder Group
 - What groups or individuals come to mind as possible participants for the Statewide Stakeholder Group?
 - Individuals can send feedback to Megan McKinney Cooper (megan.mckinneycooper@jumpinhealth.org), Charlie Geier (Charlie@shineearly.com), or Mike Bachman (mbachman@indianaspark.com)

10. Public Comment

- Question from general public: What is the difference between Spark Learning Lab and Shine Early Learning?
 - Spark Learning Lab is a project of Shine Early Learning. We are the implementation team for Indiana.
- Comment from Betsy: This is incredibly important work to this state and those who live and work here. We are very grateful for the work of everyone on this call.

11. Betsy adjourned the meeting at 2:49pm.

12. Next Meeting: November 6, 2020 from 1pm-3pm. Virtual meeting ONLY.