Present:
Tonia Carriger, Betsy Delgado, Mary Gardner, Dr. Nancy Holsapple, Nicole Norvell, Kerri Wortinger

1. **Call to Order**
   - Betsy called the meeting to order at 10:02am.

2. **Approve November Meeting Minutes**
   - Motion to approve: All ayes

3. **Welcome**
   Betsy Delgado, ELAC Chairwoman
   - We've decided to dedicate each of our ELAC meetings to a report recommendation (from the most recent report on the impact of COVID-19). This meeting we're looking at recommendations one and two. Next time we'll be looking at the third and possibly the fourth recommendation.

4. **ELAC Report and COVID Dashboard**
   Kim Hodge, Data Workgroup Chair
   - COVID-19 Report and Dashboard
     - This was not a traditional annual report but an additional report looking at the impact of COVID-19.
     - The report was released in January, and the dashboard was released in February.
     - We had a great open and click through rate with the emails announcing these.

Comment from Nicole: I think the point that we're trying to prove (with the dashboard) is what is the capacity that we lost. I have been thinking about this now that we've included programs opened during this time. This isn't something that is determined by just closed program numbers.
Response from Kim: I would love to know if this is a helpful pulse check on what our supply is. It's not quite real time, but it'll be updated monthly.

Question from Nicole: I wonder how hard it would be to add in licensed capacity (except for ministries and a few others) to see if we lost or gained seats in any given time period.
Response from Kim: I think that's a great idea. We know there is a difference in capacity by program type, and you can't assume that if you grew in programs, you grew in capacity.

Question from Betsy: Is it possible to distinguish if a program closed because of COVID or for another reason? Maybe if we compare to previous years? I would love to have this update at every meeting to have an idea of the fluidity of the environment in general and the impact of COVID. How do we compare to other states with percentage lost?

Response from Kim: I think there are a few states out there that we could do a comparison analysis of. In terms of timeline, we just need to connect with the data analyst and can determine what is possible and make the updates to the dashboard then. So hopefully within a few weeks as long as there's not a long delay for the dataset.

Response from Nicole: I have no idea what the reasons for closure that are listed in the dataset. We are tracking it manually, but I don't know what is entered in the database. Just so I'm clear about expectations. It is possible that information on why a program closed is not available in the database. In the past, we never had a real reason to track why programs closed besides due to an enforcement action.

Response from Nicole: It may be a little difficult because each state handled things differently. Also neighboring states did not keep most child cares open except for essential workers. The data from Michigan and Ohio does look very different in general.

Response from Betsy: I think maybe if we could say, this is what we did that's unique compared to what other states did. To be able to tell our story about coming together to utilize our resources, where we never fully shutdown, how that impacted our recovery, etc.

Response from Nicole: There are some national papers out there that we could provide to this group that describes what each state did, particularly around their CARES dollars.

Response from Betsy: I think that's perfect Nicole. I'm trying to paint a picture, if we're advocating for the things we're requesting in the recommendations, then some of the answers to these questions will help tell our story including how we're an essential piece of the economy.

Response from Nicole: I will get with Jen to review what other states have done and bring it back to this group to review.

- 2022 Annual Report
  - Requesting feedback around the area(s) of focus, timeline, length, and other considerations for the next report.
  - With the size of the group, Betsy opened the discussion to the full group online (around 20 participants).

Question from Nicole: Have we ever asked the intended audience these questions? Now that we've produced multiple reports.

Response from Amanda: The Data Workgroup has done some targeted surveying in the past. We could certainly send a survey out to the email lists.

- Areas of focus provided in the chat discussion:
  - 0-3 focus
  - Workforce - both parents in the workforce and the early childhood workforce
  - Kindergarten readiness, learning loss, and where are missing students
  - County snapshots that are consistent over time
  - Update on the status of previous recommendations
  - Mental health and wellness for staff and families
  - Social emotional learning with children

Comment from Dr. Nancy Holsapple: Enrollment of children ages 3-5 as of December 1, 2020, is down 1,500 students compared to 2019. (Dr. Holsapple lost internet connection.)

Comment from Charlie: Forward thinking focus areas based on recommendations. This is what we recommend and then ELAC determines what they prioritize for the following year.

Comment from general public: Helping legislators and others understand what it's like for a child care to run like a business (e.g., why does it cost so much money, where do all the costs go).
Response from Betsy: That is something we are trying to capture. We're worried about business models which is why it's one of our recommendations.
- If I'm a business and I'm going to give an employee a stipend for child care, they want to know what that means to the family economically.

Comment from general public: Would like the cost of care section back
Response from Betsy: When I think of the economics of childcare section, I am thinking of children, parents, and the workforce.
Response from Kim: I think cost of care is the most missed component of the annual report. We plan to get that back in the report for 2022.

- When do we want the 2022 Annual Report to be available?
  - Typically the ELAC report is presented to the Committee in November and released in January. We've tried to get the report in the hands of legislators before the session. Is that still a priority?

Question from Betsy: Would like to follow the guidance of the workgroup. What is practical?
Response from Kim: It is still feasible at this point to get the report finalized by the end of 2021.

Response from Amanda: We'll take this feedback and create a survey to get feedback and share the feedback and a proposed report outline at the May ELAC meeting.

5. **Recommendation #1: Increase Funding, Collaboration, and Flexibility**
    Nicole Norvell, Director, Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL)
    *   OECOSL formed an Ad Hoc Committee to review CCDF policies that have been put into place during the pandemic, assess the benefits and challenges, and make recommendations.
    *   The committee consists of 11 individuals who represent different provider types and communities. They will meet 2-3 times over the next few months. We want to look at how the policies actually impact the families when executed.

Question from Betsy: Is there a timeline for when the Committee could report on progress to ELAC?
Response from Nicole: I think third or fourth quarter is reasonable.

6. **Recommendation #2: Enhance and Increase Use of Business Management Supports**
    Charlie Geier, Vice President, Shine Advance at Shine Early Learning
    *   First Children's Finance and SPARK Learning Lab Business Supports
        o   We joined the ECE Business Collaboratory, an initiative of First Children's Finance. It's a cohort of states that are focused on examining the business side of child care and improving it from multiple levels.
        o   Indiana was one of 12 states selected to participate in the 2020 cohort. Indiana team includes individuals from OECOSL, SPARK, Early Learning Indiana (ELI), Chances and Services for Youth (CASY), and other contributors as needed.
    *   Four phases to the work: Mapping, Analysis, Planning, Implementation
        o   What do we map and analyze? The child care ecosystem (business, community, systems) to see what is happening in these areas so far.
    *   What have we learned?
        o   Indiana is a shining star of the cohort.
        o   Challenges uncovered:
            ▪   Lack of continuity, lack of intention of longevity
            ▪   Transition of local pilots to statewide initiatives
            ▪   Lack of communication of supports and resources
            ▪   Lack of coordination among initiatives
            ▪   Initiatives rely heavily on OECOSL and philanthropic dollars
            ▪   Limited impact and evaluation data

Question from general public: Are you looking at the systems and frameworks that are the result of federal and state laws/grants (ex. CCDF) or other influences like that?

Response from Charlie: Yes, we certainly look at the federal and state funding streams. Examining the efficiency and efficacy of those funding streams comes in the next phase of the work, the analysis phase. Through this cohort work, we're learning some really interesting and creative ways states are looking to improve access.

Question from Betsy: Why are we not evaluating? We're investing from a variety of different resources, is that the reason? Is evaluation what we should focus on in the future? We have been doing the work but don't have the data or evidence for the work.

Response from Charlie: The idea of local control is really important in our state. How do you bridge that idea from local control to the larger vision? And I'm not sure we have that larger vision has been spoken. What it looks like is a lot of tactics, but they're not attached to a strategy or goal. So we don't have the strategy or goal in place to evaluate. Tactics have been tied to a theory or mission to improve the lives of children but not a larger vision.

Response from Nicole: The comments that my team has made during this mapping process has been that there has been a lot of stuff done. I think local control is a great thing; they know their community and how to solve issues. But it becomes a lot of disconnected initiatives that are often held on by a single point of contact, and if that person leaves, then the connection to anything larger is gone.

Response from general public: I think it's great to allow local control and experimentation, but we don't take what is learned and put it into a larger picture.

Response from Charlie: The initiatives are often led by the usual leaders, but we're not including more at the table to help drive longevity.

Comment from Betsy: I think we should include these thoughts and feedback into moving forward.

Response from Charlie: If you want to include a "Business of Child Care" section you can use this model. There's data behind all of it.

- The Business Side of Early Care and Education
  Lisa Mettler, Business Management Specialist, Indiana SPARK
  - SPARK brought on a business manager to work with providers on the business side to provide supports.
  - There are over 80 resources and trainings on My SPARK Learning Lab for any provider to access.
  - Examples of additional resources that are coming:

- Financial self-assessment and action plan as part of trainings on financial health
- Resources on recruiting high quality staff
- SPARK Marketing and Communications Campaign – business owners can see what is available to them
- SPARK Learning Lab Business Collection: 7 resources that once they're completed, a provider would receive a certificate for those hours
  - Business Coaching is also occurring with Tier 1 providers who receive targeted I-SAT supports and internal coach support on business content.
  - Next Steps:
    - Tier 2 Business Cohorts
    - Establish partnerships and continue to implement resources and supports

Question from Betsy: Is there a requirement that they interact with you, or is it via referral?
Response from Lisa: They can interact with us with a referral from a partner or by taking the I-SAT and determining this as an area of need.

Question from Betsy: How many are you working with across the state?
Response from Charlie: In general, in the last quarter of 2020, we engaged with a third of all providers and that's growing. Many of these business support resources are available to all providers.
Response from Lisa: There are also live webinars of "Ask an Expert" where they can ask questions.

Question from Betsy: I wonder how many providers who are thinking of closing, reach out to you, if providers know what danger they're in or if this can help.
Response from Charlie: I think that's a great point. Coming up on a year of implementation, getting the word out is still a piece of this work. The more ambassadors we can have guiding folks this way will be key. We have to have a multi-tiered approach to engagement.

Question from general public: Are you aware of the Indiana Early Learning Hub?
Response from Charlie: Yes, absolutely. They're definitely part of the mapping that we've done. We've talked a lot with them.

7. **Future Agenda Items to Discuss**
   - Report on anything that comes out of the Legislative Session that would impact our work.
     - Betsy: I'll reach out to Anne Valentine to present on that.

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- How to stabilize first year programs, especially as it relates to succession planning in light of the many programs that are/will close.
- ELAC will add this agenda item (future agenda items to discuss) to the agenda for each meeting.
- Feel free to share your thoughts with Betsy or Amanda on what you would like to see discussed at future meetings.

8. Betsy adjourned the meeting at 3:24pm.

9. Next Meeting: May 26th 9am-11am ET, Virtual Meeting ONLY