

Early Childhood Advisory Council

August 18, 2016

MINUTES

Handouts Associated with the Meeting:

- Ohio's Comprehensive Professional Development System External Evaluation Presentation, Executive Summary, Overall Recommendations
- ODJFS Director Memo O.A.C. 5101:2-16-41 Clarification

In Attendance: Valerie Alloy, Anita Armstrong, Todd Barnhouse, Michael Batchelder, Kara Bertke-Wente, Day Chesney, Joni Close, Rebekah Dorman, Marcia Egbert, Tess Elshoff, Wendy Grove, Asyia Haile, Kimberly Hauck, Barbara Haxton, Margaret Hulbert, Shancie Jenkins, Karen Lampe, Robyn Lightcap, Susan Peet, Angel Rhodes, Judy Romano, Stephanie Siddens, Yolanda Talley

Absent: Stephanie Wright Byrd, Lowell Howard, Debe Terhar

Facilitator: Jacqueline Romer-Sensky

Guests: Nick Derksen, Kathleen Carr, Jacinda Dariotis, Julia Degreg, Laura DiCola, Cynthia Dungey, Teresa Fedor, Lisa Golden, Deanna Jackson, Eric Karolak, Jon Keeling, Devin Keithley, Carissa Need, Aileen O'Donnell, Sandy Oxley, Wendy Patton, Lauren Porter, Valerie Ridgeway, Jason Smith, Jen Stack, Debbie Zorn

Approval of Minutes: Minutes were amended to reflect the twelve counties not covered by the ECMH system. Motion to approve the amended Minutes: Marcia Egbert; Second: Susan Peet; Unanimous approval.

Comprehensive Professional Development System Evaluation

Dr. Wendy Grove, Debbie Zorn, Kathleen Carr, Lauren Porter, Julia Degreg, Jacinda Dariotis

The five-member evaluation team presented the Comprehensive Professional Development (PD) System External Evaluation. (See Handouts). The PD system work and the evaluation effort are part of the Early Learning Challenge Grant (ELCG). The evaluation presentation represented a qualitative and quantitative review of the project, pursuing three primary evaluative objectives, as follows:

1. The extent to which a seamless comprehensive PD system has been established and coordinated
2. Appraise the development and usefulness of the 16 new PD modules and different formats
3. Appraise the actual delivery of PD content within the established PD system.

Specific findings and recommendations were shared (See Handouts.)

Member Discussion:

- There was discussion about how to enhance partnerships with higher education. Currently, higher education is involved in developing the modules and training the trainers. Going forward, consider a stronger continuum for pre-service through in-service professional development. The current conversations and collaborations are going in the right direction.
- The cross-agency governance structure was discussed as formalizing some of the successful committee work that operated within the ELCG.
- Members inquired on how a system supports the coordinators and facilitators as well as enhanced on-line learning. The recommendation was to ensure that sharing pedagogy practices, for both face-to-face and on-line training, remains a key element going forward.
- A member inquired how targets are established for local professional development trainers to ensure healthy competition while attaining the desired coverage for the field. The needs

assessments conducted by SSTs and R&Rs help calibrate service levels and coverage strategies. Current contracting discussions are also focused on the best deployment.

- Members reported that the overall ELCG professional development effort was a positive experience that elevated system collaboration and individual professional growth through the development of so many PD modules, approaches, and policies. The lessons learned have been, and will continue to be, applied to future system decisions.
- The group saluted the evaluation as another piece of learning for PD system improvement. The State's PD Coordination Group continues to meet and is actively pursuing implementation of recommendations. It may also be helpful to engage the ECAC sub-committee to help inform future steps.

Professional Development Career Pathways Update

Kara Bertke-Wente, Wendy Grove

The Career Pathway Levels were last updated in 2011. The State has begun revising the Career Pathways with a goal of streamlining the process, reviewing if Credentials and Certificates are adequately rated, if components are assigned appropriate point levels, and how professional experience is being valued. Mentoring, as a major component of professional growth, is also being reviewed.

ODJFS and ODE have produced an initial, draft product. Over the next two months, the State plans to share the draft product with appropriate internal and external stakeholder groups for feedback and revisions. The goal is to have an updated product by October 1, 2016, with a later date for implementing a mentoring component of July 1, 2017. Any Career Pathways change must have appropriate transition timeframes to ensure appropriate implementation.

General Updates

Dr. Angel Rhodes

The Early Childhood Vision for the Kasich Administration remains the impetus for decisions and action.

- The Administration's vision has been and remains ensuring children have access to higher quality early childhood programs to improve kindergarten readiness. The Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) rating system serves as the indicator of quality. Quality begins at the three-star rating. One- and two-star ratings are in the introductory steps to providing quality programs. The Vision has three goals:
 1. All providers serving children in publicly funded childcare will be in the star-rating system by 2020.
 2. All providers serving children in publicly funded childcare will be highly rated by 2025.
 - Target metrics are
 - By 2017, 25% of PFCC programs
 - By 2019, 40% of PFCC programs
 - By 2021, 60% of PFCC programs
 - By 2023, 80% of PFCC programs
 - By 2025, all programs
 3. All four-year-old children living in families earning below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level will have access to high-quality preschool.

Early childhood system, program, and funding changes are designed to achieve these three primary goals.

Extended Day Rule Clarification

Cynthia Dungey, Kara Bertke-Wente

ODJFS shared its perspective on the Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-16-41 clarification. The August 1, 2016 memo clarified longstanding, existing policy. The federal government recognizes that Ohio always has been and continues to be “an extended day” State.

For definitional purposes:

- Extended Day State: State Policy says programs may bill the state for a publicly funded child care (PFCC) eligible child for the hours they serve a child outside of the federally required Head Start hours.
- Layered State: State policy says programs can bill State programs and Head Start for the same hours for the same child.

In Ohio’s federal region, three states follow the extended-day model and two follow the layered model. Ohio has followed the extended-day model.

Per the Director’s memo, a pledge was made to ensure that any funding realized from the rule clarification would remain within the early childhood system. The plan for that \$12 million follows.

- All SUTQ-rated programs (1,2,3,4,5 Star rated) will receive a 4% increase in the publicly-funded child care base rates.
- Additionally, higher-rated programs will receive an increase in the enhanced SUTQ rate.
 1. The three-star enhanced rate moves from 18% to 21%
 2. The four-star enhanced rate moves from 25% to 29%
 3. The five-star enhanced rate moves from 31% to 35%
- The rate increases will be effective in early September 2016.

The Director shared appreciation for the opportunity to hear the feedback of ECAC members directly.

Member Discussion

- The Director clarified that funds realized as a result of the clarification will become part of the ongoing base-rate for PFCC rated providers, in addition to increased enhanced rates for highly rated programs.
- The Director clarified that it is considered layering when a child is being served by both the Head Start and the PFCC program during the same hours/timeframes.
- A member shared that child care providers who are ending Head Start partnerships will bill full-time for an eligible PFCC child, which could mean there may not be \$12 million in funds to re-position.
- A member shared that the end result of this rule clarification will be diminished Head Start and child care partnerships.
- Members reported that the PFCC rates are not at levels that supports the cost of quality. The rates are even more concerning considering that up to two-thirds of PFCC children are served in unrated programs. The Head Start partnerships was one way to blend dollars to pay for the cost of quality. Without the partnerships or a major increase in PFCC rates, some providers may no longer be able to seek or sustain a high quality rating.
- A member voiced concern that ODJFS views PFCC rates as “hours” when most programs look at the overall cost of a “program.” Head Start partners view the blended funds as a way to deliver enhanced service level across the program; not as a way to subsidize specific hours of care. The three models being utilized in partnerships draw \$10 million in federal Head Start funding.
- OHSAL reports that many of its local partnership programs are actively considering scaling back on the number of children served in partnership or ending partnerships completely due to the change in their business models based on the rule clarification. This will impact a large number of children and their families. This includes some areas of the state with limited access to care.

- A current federal Head Start grant opportunity “requires layering” of funds. The Director recognizes that applicants need to comply with the grant requirements, and it may be up to the federal government to define what they are seeking. Meanwhile, local programs are hearing from the federal system that this is a State question. ODJFS pledged to gain clarification.
- An OHSAI member survey regarding the open federal Head Start expansion grant application shows approximately 10 Ohio Early Head Start programs plan to apply for an estimated 903 new slots, and 37 programs plan to apply for full-day/extended day slots impacting 4,121 children. There is concern that without a clear statement regarding how programs will deal with the layering requirement the federal grant applications may not be viewed as meeting eligibility standards.
- A recent OHSAI survey of other states shows significant numbers of states allow “layering” and a majority of states allow “layering” and “extended day.”
- A member reported that pediatricians are also asking questions and voicing concern that the rule clarification will do harm.
- Several members recommended a one-year extension during which “layering” would be allowable due to the level of uncertainty around how a rule clarification impacts local program partnerships and the overall early childhood system.

ODE Update

Dr. Wendy Grove

- The Early Childhood Education (ECE) program has awarded 18,400 slots. To date, implementation appears to be progressing smoothly. It was clarified that all ECE grantees receive the same funding amount per awarded slot.
- Early Learning Assessment (ELA) data is now actively being collected. 17 programs are piloting technology tools to handle the assessments more expeditiously. ODE looks forward to being able share data on the development of preschool children.
- The federal Every Student Succeeds Act continues to be implemented . ODE is hosting webcasts and stakeholder meetings through October. To learn more about participating or to view a webcast, please go to the following link: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Every-Student-Succeeds-Act-ESSA>
- ODE has hired a staff member to focus upon early literacy – birth through third grade. Melissa Wervey-Mayer will focus on PD and building teacher capacity on early literacy.

DODD

Kimberly Hauck

- The administration of “Part C” programs has fully transitioned to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.

OhioMHAS Update

Dr. Valerie Alloy

- A presentation on Early Childhood Mental Health Initiatives will be part of a future meeting. To date, 109 individuals have received their ECMH professional credential and another 35 individual applications are in process.

Member Discussion

- A member reported some statewide call line implementation issues for deploying ECMH consultants. OhioMHAS will use the feedback to make an adjustment to the system.

ODJFS Update

Kara Bertke-Wente

- ODJFS will soon be seeking proposals for mini-grants to engage local partners in practical approaches to recruit more early childhood providers to enroll in SUTQ and to advance to higher SUTQ ratings. \$2 million has been set aside for the grants.
- The State is finalizing contracts with two vendors to provide free curricula and associated support materials to PFCC providers. Providers may select their preferred curriculum. ODJFS anticipates providing more guidance by October 1st. The goal is begin processing provider requests this fall. The current State commitment is to provide access to vendor-based assessments until the Early Learning Assessments is fully operational.

Next meeting

The ECAC next meets on September 15, 2016 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at OCCRRRA.