

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION
Early Intervention Committee Meeting

LOCATION
Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference

Meeting Date
January 13, 2010
9:00 a.m.

Attendees:

Debbie Kitelinger, chair
Dorothy Erickson
Maggie Ferry
Susan Steele
Kama Gregory
Margaret Kavanaugh
Linda Borghols
Patrick Pillai
Amy Simpson

Community Members/Guests:

Sarah Souders

Staff:

Teresa Holt

Prepared by:
Paula DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting

Call to Order – 9:00 a.m.
Roll Call

Welcome from the Chair

Announcements and Good News

Teresa Holt stated that the EIC brochure has been printed.

Approval of the Minutes

Patrick Pillai made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Amy Simpson **SECONDED**. The minutes were approved.

Approval of the Agenda

Teresa Holt noted an amendment to the agenda where it says “Governor’s Budget” and instead they are going to replace that with review the APR for ILP.

Conference Reports

Zero to Three National Training Institute

Maggie Ferry stated that it was a wonderful conference. One thing that struck her was the data that showed that children who watch the Baby Einstein DVDs have 6 to 8 fewer words in their receptive vocabulary than those that do not watch the DVDs.

She stated that data also shows that children attending developmentally appropriate early childhood programs experience less stress, like school better, are more creative, exhibit less test anxiety, show greater pride in their accomplishments and have better success as they were followed from pre-school through 8th grade.

She stated that there was also good information on music and how it stimulates all areas of the brain, supports language and literacy patterning and numerous physical movement and social-emotional growth and cognitive processing.

Maggie Ferry also stated that there was information on interventions to support maternal parenting. She attended a session on Enhancing Developmentally Oriented Primary Care Best Practices which outlined developmental screenings and referrals, social-emotional development, identifying post-partum depression and how it affects the child's social-emotional growth as well as cognitive processing.

There was a session on early detection and referral and the domestic effects on children, and another session on grandparents raising their grandchildren, which outlined the challenges that grandparents have and how the challenges can be addressed to meet the child's needs. A lot of children being raised by their grandparents are found to be in need of special education services.

Maggie stated that there is a screening tool called KIPS that enhances family services, tracks progress and measures outcomes. The tool is for caregivers of children aged 2 months to 5 years.

Maggie stated that it was a very, very well put together conference and she encourages continued participation.

OSEP

Amy Simpson stated that she put a summary of her report in writing and can send it out to whoever would like it. She stated that this was her third trip to OSEP, and it was a great conference.

Amy noted that overwhelmingly, the discussions were about the financial difficulties that many states are having in Part C and how states are using their ARRA funds. She stated that approximately 75 percent of states are using ARRA funds for direct services.

She said that they discussed the Early Learning Challenge grant which is a collaborative effort between the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Social Services for children birth through 3rd grade. It's looking at how Part C fits into an overall system of care for young children. She was excited about the fact that these two entities are communicating with each other. Amy noted that in a conversation with Erin Kinavey, Alaska is planning to put in for one of these grants. There will be \$50 billion in grants that will be available to states over the next couple of

years. She is excited about this new feeling of collaboration. She stated that the Department of Education presented how they envision this program to be. She noted that children with disabilities will be represented in all sectors of how the program will roll out instead of being treated separately.

Amy stated that she attended a session on Maximizing Third-Party pay in Early Intervention. She stated that Colorado recently added legislation that mandates billing for early intervention services in a creative way that includes insurance companies and a trust system for those children that have ISSPs and are enrolled in ILP. Massachusetts also has a program, but it is slightly more complicated than Colorado's program.

Amy attended a session on assistive technology for children in early intervention and noted that it was more of a research study.

She attended a session with the ICCs from across the nation where they discussed most states using their PTI as a training ground for parents to be part of ICC. She stated that in Alaska, she believes they are using Partners in Policymaking for that. She also noted that the closing speaker, Sarah Vazquez, was incredible. She hit home for Amy that people's expectations that they have for children with disabilities need to be high.

Amy Simpson concluded her presentation by thanking the Council for sending her.

Teresa Holt added to the presentation on the OSEP Conference by stating that she attended the Early Intervention Family Alliance Parent Leadership Award. Any family members who are interested in joining that alliance should contact Teresa. She stated that they could probably do something similar in Alaska for both parents and providers who are in need of some recognition for the work that they have done.

Teresa also stated that they heard that Alaska is one of the few states whose Infant Learning Program is not in financial dire straits. She noted that some states are discussing removing the Infant Learning Programs because it is an optional program under federal law.

Teresa stated that she went to a session on early detection for hearing loss and the importance of early detection. She was surprised to find out that

children can get hearing aids or cochlear implants as early as two months old.

Sarah Souders added that it was very depressing to hear about the financial dilemma that other states are facing. She stated that she attended a session about communicating with families and interpreting assessments. She also attended another session on outreach to physicians for referral for early intervention services.

Review of ILP APR

Teresa Holt stated that she needs some volunteers who would be interested in reviewing the APR and then gathering online for an hour or so to provide comments. Amy Simpson, Dorothy Erickson and Debbie Kitelinger volunteered.

Review of Indicators 5 and 6

Teresa Holt stated that these indicators are the percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs compared to national data. She stated that data they have from the last APR is that for birth to one, Alaska ranks 7 in the nation, she believes.

Linda Borghols stated that they are putting their efforts into reviewing the whole document right now to make sure the data they are using is as clean as possible. She also noted that there have been changes in the last APR from the previous year, so it's hard to compare the two documents.

Teresa stated that it looks like the percentages have increased. Teresa asked the group for suggestions or comments to help with better referral systems and people getting plans in place.

Amy Simpson suggested using the new EIC brochure to help physicians across the state understand what infant learning does and how to help families. They need to let physicians know that there are ways to assess developmental milestones in a way that they can do it in an objective way. Linda Borghols agreed with Amy. Teresa stated that she can send out an e-mail to people for suggestions on appropriate distribution places for the EIC brochure.

Amy Simpson stated that she believes that Erin Kinavey would like to use some of the ARRA money to have ASQs online so any family can check their child's development. Amy also suggested the idea of a computer and printer in pediatrician's offices so that families can do the screenings and then go over the results with the doctor.

Progress on the Work Plan

Governor's Scholarship Program

Teresa Holt stated that they have been closely following the progress on the Governor's Scholarship Program proposal. She stated that she listened to the hearings before the Senate and House Education Committees. An expert from WICHE was brought in to testify and he recommended to the legislature that they go back and make a decision about what kind of scholarship program they are looking for. The three options he suggested were providing the scholarship program for: High performing students, students who cannot afford college, or a combination of the two. She stated that he also asked the legislature to think about why they want this.

Teresa stated that a downfall to this program is that it doesn't address students who are middle aged or late into their 20s that decide later on to go on to college. It has to be used within six years of graduation.

Update on the Survey

Teresa Holt stated that the survey is in two sections, and they haven't sent out the second section yet. The first section was to get the names and addresses of all the people currently providing pre-school services. They heard back from over 50 percent of the districts. Melanie Leydon will call the remaining districts so they can get that information.

Early Childhood Networking Forum

Teresa stated that the dates are May 10th and 11th in Anchorage. The current issue is funding and who is going to pay for what.

Report from OCS/ILP

Linda Borghols stated that they are working on the cost study, but she doesn't have a current update on it. They are also working very hard on the APR. She also noted that professional development is going very well and Meghan is working hard on that and they will have a pilot training for staff in February.

Report from AILPA

Amy Simpson stated that she is continuing to recruit for additional members of AILPA to sit on the EIC.

Amy also noted that AILPA is writing a letter to Key Campaign requesting that they begin to educate about the change in eligibility from 50 percent delay to 25 percent delay or parity with the Part B system. They are not currently asking for any money but rather are educating to eventually get that to be one of the platforms for Key Campaign in the next year or two.

Amy also stated that they are working on some bylaws changes so that all people employed through AILPA or through the ILP grantee program would all be members of AILPA.

Report from DEED

Teresa Holt stated that the Department transferred Don Enoch from special education to charter schools.

Important Future Meetings/Conferences/Trainings

Teresa Holt stated that the full Council meeting will be held in Juneau, January 26 – 28. The major issues are crisis response, autism insurance coverage, the rate review and the exit exam.

The Alaska Association of Education of Young Children (AAEYC) conference will be held in Anchorage, February 4 – 5.

The ASSEC conference will be held in Anchorage, February 8 – 10. Teresa asked that anyone interested in attending contact her this week.

Teresa Holt also noted that there is a training being put on by the Deaf Bilingual Coalition. The message is that young children who are hard of

hearing need to learn both sign and English because sometimes hearing aides or cochlear implants may not work and there will be a need to communicate. Their presentations are going to be on the importance of language acquisition for deaf infants and young deaf children through American Sign Language.

The training will be in Anchorage and it would be for early childhood providers of any type from 10:00 – 4:00 in the Council building on the 8th floor. They are also working on getting the training video conferenced to Fairbanks and Juneau. They are also going to train the Anchorage School District staff on Friday. On Saturday, they are offering a half-day presentation to parents in Anchorage. It is a free training and she encourages people to attend.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the EIC will be on February 8th, possibly at the ILP office from 5:00 - 6:30. People would need to arrive around 4:45 to check into the building.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.