

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

Early Intervention Committee

LOCATION

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

Meeting Date

**Wednesday, March 11, 2015
10:00 a.m.**

Attendees:

Karli Lopez, Chair
Angie Fraize
Erin Kinavey Wennerstrom
Amy Simpson
Laurie Thomas

Community Members/Guests:

Sue Armstrong
Cassidy Jones
Jimael Johnson
Kathleen Yarr
Cindy Adams
Matt Bockhorst
Amber Mavis-Bracone
Blayne White

Staff:

Christie Reinhardt

Prepared by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 10:00 a.m.
ROLL CALL

Welcome from the Chair

Amy Simpson, acting chair, welcomed the committee members to the meeting.

Announcements and Good News

Erin Kinavey Wennerstrom reported that they are overhauling the curriculum for the Early Childhood Special Education Master's program, and they expect the changes to be approved by the end of the semester and implemented by the spring semester next year. She will be looking for some feedback from the committee in the future.

Susan Armstrong expressed her appreciation to Karli Lopez for getting the Down syndrome resources for RurALCAP Early Head Start.

Christie Reinhardt shared the good news that her son finished his third quarter of school on the honor roll.

Approval of Agenda and Approval of Past Minutes

Approval of the agenda and previous meeting minutes was tabled.

Correspondence

There was no correspondence reported at the meeting.

Reports

Chair's Report

There was no chair's report available for the meeting.

EI/ILP

Laurie Thomas reported that they have been busy working on their strategic plan with their finance committee and looking at their system of

payments for parents where the most radical changes are proposed. Those changes involve an annual participation fee rather than tying a cost to service. They continue to review other areas of the strategic plan including finance, professional development, public awareness, policies and procedures, and service delivery.

Laurie Thomas reported that their TAs are wrapping up their site visits for the year, and they are preparing to put out continuation grants for programs.

Laurie Thomas noted that she and Christie Reinhardt did a presentation on parent rights.

AILPA

Amy Simpson reported that AILPA met and their focus was on the organization of AILPA. They are reviewing strategic plans from different agencies and are working with a facilitator to define the purpose and role of AILPA for the future.

EED

Cassidy Jones highlighted the following activities that the Department participated in:

Meetings and trainings include:

- Governor's Council's Education Committee, Autism Committee, and Developmental Disabilities Committee.
- TAESE director teleconference
- ASSEC Conference
- AIEI Policy and Regulation
- LID Transition Assessment Webinar
- Part C MOA meeting
- Small State Consortium Teleconference
- AMP it Up Day
- Special Olympics Teleconference (OSEP)
- NCSI Teleconference
- OSEP conference calls and representative meeting
- Anchorage School District Strategic Planning Meeting

- PTAC Teleconference

Cassidy Jones reported that the Department is drafting their monitoring schedule for next year. The districts on the rotation for next year include:

Anchorage	Galena	Southwest Region
Bering Strait	Kake	St. Marys
Chugach	Kenai	Yakutat
Copper River	Kodiak	Yupitit
Cordova	Lower Yukon	
Fairbanks	Mat-Su	

Cassidy Jones reported the districts completed for FY15 include:

Alaska Gateway (T/A)	Delta-Greely
Kodiak Island (T/A)	Lake & Peninsula
Southwest Region (T/A)	Lower Kuskokwim
Nenana (T/A)	Kuspuk
Aleutians East	Ketchikan
Annette Island	Chatham
Pribilof	Wrangell
Yukon	Anchorage
Koyukuk	Mat-Su
Bristol Bay	Fairbanks
Dillingham	

Cassidy Jones reported that the remaining districts scheduled for monitoring include Bristol Bay, Dillingham, Wrangell, and Anchorage.

Cassidy Jones reported that the time sensitive activities the Department has been working on include:

- GAINS no-cost extension
- Rewriting the GAINS/SPDG grant application
- APR/SSIP review
- Vacancy for an Education Specialist II position
- Contract renewals
- Update GMS for next fiscal year
- Federal grant development initiated (VI-B and 619)

Cassidy Jones reported that the other activities the Department has been working on include:

- Assurance Project – A memo was sent out to all districts to gather information on three assurances, two associated with Child Find, and one associated with the specific learning disability criteria.
- Reviewing Employment First data collection
- Annual travel planning
- OHI – A definition of physician
- Updating the handbook for the implementation of new assessments
- New monitoring software research project
- Website update is pending
- Staff duty assignments are temporarily modified
- Scheduled the discretionary grant training
- Planning for next director's training

Amy Simpson asked about the monitoring process. Cassidy Jones stated that they monitor 56 districts. Anchorage, Mat-Su, and Fairbanks are monitored every year, and then there is a rotating schedule for all the other districts. Essentially, the Department notifies the districts of a visit to look at a list of students' files to ensure all the regulatory benchmarks are being met.

EHDI/WCFH

Beth Kaplan was not available to report on EHDI activities. Jimael Johnson, from the Women's, Children and Family Health Section, reported that the planning for a statewide resource called *Help Me Grow* has been launched. The project is described as a centralized resource bank of services for children ages 0 to 8, and it will be housed in a call center similar to the 211 program. The leadership committee is very comprehensive and includes a lot of community providers. Plans are being made to travel to California to do site visits at places where they have high functioning models of *Help Me Grow*, and to attend the national forum for *Help Me Grow*.

FASD SUBCOMMITTEE

Christie Reinhardt reported that the FASD Subcommittee has not met since the last EIC meeting.

AUTISM SUBCOMMITTEE

Christie Reinhardt reported that the Autism Committee met two weeks ago at the Trust with a facilitator from Agnew::Beck in attendance to help define a mission statement, goals, core values, and develop priorities. The five major priorities include:

1. Screening and early detection
2. Early intervention and education
3. Funding and special issues
4. Community integration and involvement
5. Workforce development and training

Christie Reinhardt stated that the focus is across the life span and across the spectrum. She stated that the meeting next month will include a report from LEND, and a negotiation with the facilitator to do a face-to-face meeting the end of April to finish the five-year plan. Christie encouraged committee members who are interested in participating in any of the work groups to contact her.

OLD BUSINESS

FOLLOW UP ON THE NEXT STEPS FOR TELEHEALTH

Christie Reinhardt surveyed the committee members to see who would be interested in a telehealth work group to facilitate a discussion on telehealth and early intervention. Kathleen Yarr stated that she was interested in telehealth. Christie Reinhardt stated that she will follow up with a document outlining the information from the discussions so far and send it out to the committee members, and they will move forward within the committee.

NEW BUSINESS

INCLUSIVE CHILDCARE – State Requirements and Programs

Cindy Adams, from the Child Care Program Office, spoke about the Alaska Child Care Inclusive Program, *Alaska IN!* and the Child Care Assistance Program, both of which are housed in the Child Care Program Office.

Cindy Adams reported that the *Alaska IN!* program, which is a grant program, is overseen by their resource and referral agency, thread, and it's for families participating in the Child Care Assistance Program who have children with special needs. She stated that providers that choose to take children with special needs that are participating in the Child Care Assistance Program could receive additional funds to help support the child.

Karli Lopez described examples of some of the issues and barriers involved with childcare for children with special needs:

- Lack of availability of child care.
- Lack of referrals and outreach to parents of children with special needs.
- Lack of referrals for training opportunities for providers.
- Access for parents who may not qualify for the Child Care Assistance Program.

Erin Kinavey Wennerstrom commented on the parity between the definitions of special needs with the Child Care Assistance Program and Part C and Part B, and stated that a shared definition of eligibility may be beneficial as there is a breakdown in terms of defining special needs, and it would make it more streamlined for programs.

Cindy Adams reported that currently there are 5,000 children participating in the Child Care Assistance Program, which equates to approximately 3,000 families; and from those children, 37 children with special needs are participating in *Alaska IN!*. She described the application process as filling out an application called the Accommodation Scale, where the family and the provider both need to rate the child. From that rating, they formulate what level of support the family or provider would receive; 25, 50, 75 or 100 percent of the total of their childcare assistance. Along with the assistance,

thread's resource and referral staff develop a plan that could include training, additional staff, and materials to support the provider and family.

Cindy Adams was joined by Amber Mavis-Bracone, who described the provider recruitment activities and processes. Amber stated that recruitment and retention of child care providers is part of their strategic plan. She stated that they are in the process of regulation and policy revisions, and would welcome follow up and continued conversations with the committee regarding both the strategic plan and the revisions.

Christie Reinhardt extended an invitation to the Child Care Assistance Program for a seat on the Early Intervention Committee. Amber Mavis-Bracone stated that they would accept a community member seat on the committee.

Christie Reinhardt stated that it would be interesting to do a family survey relating to their experiences with the *Alaska IN!* program to find out how long it took them to become eligible, the things they found beneficial, the specific challenges, and general family outcomes.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/CONFERENCES

April 8-11, 2015

Council for Exceptional Children Conference
San Diego, CA

April 13-15, 2015

Early Childhood Mental Health Institute
Egan Center, Anchorage, AK

April 16-17, 2015

Full Lives Conference for Directed Support Professionals
Sheraton Hotel, Anchorage, AK

TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Karli Lopez asked that the regular meeting date be changed from April 22, 2015 to April 29, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.

GOOD OF THE ORDER/ADJOURNMENT

Laurie Thomas **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.