

AECCC Meeting Notes

June 19 & 20 Anchorage, Alaska

The Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council met for a day and a half in Anchorage; hosted by RurAL CAP. The first day focused on information sharing, a “dashboard” work session, and discussion on our continuing work and any potential areas of focus. Day two provided presentations and discussion on trauma informed care; trauma informed teaching practices, and trauma and school readiness.

Members in attendance: Peggy Cowan, Sally Rue, Amanda Faulkner, Debi Baldwin, Stephanie Berglund, Matthew Hirschfeld, Dee Foster, Abbe Hensley, Brian Holst, Mike Lesmann, Michael Hanley, Jeff Selvey, Ree Sailors, Paul Sugar, Erin Kinavey, Marcey Bish, and Shirley Pittz.

Official Council Actions:

- Seating of new and returning members (these folks begin serving three year terms)
 - Sally Rue, Association of Alaska School Boards
 - Amanda Faulkner, Association of Infant Learning Programs
 - Dee Foster, Mental Health Providers Representative
 - Abbe Hensley, Best Beginnings Representative
 - Brian Holst, Business Community Representative

- Provision of an AECCC letter of support for an application to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grant opportunity, implementing "Essentials for Childhood: Steps to Create Safe, Stable and Nurturing Relationships" (the letter was created and signed by Commissioner Hanley on June 21st and submitted with the grant application).

Information Sharing:

Council members presented updates around the table

- Head Start up-date on sequestration effects; about \$1.5 million cut, 250 -300 children losing services, and 65 to 70 positions cut from programs around the state. These reflect deeper consequences than first projected.
- New Parents as Teachers program in Anchorage focusing on JBER is fully enrolled, and collaborating with thread and their military liaison for child care. This is an opportunity to expand partnerships and coordination.

- Best Beginnings coordinating with Alaska Children’s Trust on materials promoting prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Imagination Library now serving 20,772 children (AK. Im. Lib. work recognized by “Dollywood”, working on getting Dolly Parton here for an Im. Lib event)
- Staffing openings at Best Beginnings, local partnerships grant, and new development positions.
- Developing a project to see who influences parents in AK
- Question on Race to the Top grants and Alaska’s potential application.
- Coordination meeting of Head Start, Infant Learning, AEYC, thread, and Best Beginnings June 28th
- Infant Learning got a state increment to expand with a focus on victims of abuse & neglect
- The home Visiting Committee has held 2 meetings, looking at who they are, who else should be involved, and what common data can be gathered.
- Held a face to face as part of the Early Childhood Mental Health institute.
- Overview of EED anticipated budget, & a review of last year’s cuts, and the Governors’ goal to remain at this level for the next five years.
- The need is to strengthen what we have.
- School district implementing PBIS in their EC programs
- Borough developing child care service program
- Curriculum initiative developing early learning standards to integrate with the Inupiat Learning Framework developed by the district. They worked with UAA EC staff to ensure best practice in this process.
- Superintendents Association working to have a unified front on support of ECE (Rural Superintendents will not let Early Childhood efforts die legislatively).
- A comment was made on the positive outcomes of stability in Superintendent positions.
- ILP now utilizing Star and an FASD diagnostic.
- 42% of their enrolled children served are CAPTA
- They have seen growth in their wait list numbers.
- Seeing a larger number of children with more than a 50% developmental delay.
- Looking to hire a social worker to be involved in all assessments, not just for CAPTA
- Implementing a whole family approach for mental health services.
- The 26 member AWEB board met in Kenai and discussed issues of Step grants, Youth First grants, CTE grants, and development of a new process for folks coming out of the military that will accredit military training and certifications.
- Updates on EED early childhood programs, implementation of cuts, new initiatives to improve quality, and data collection and use.
- ANMC moving from an inner city model to an Alaska model.
- Connectivity improvement in Nome ILP (the new hospital there is great)

- New Hotel on ANMC Campus; one floor for MCH, looking to work with Ronald McDonald House. Offers a centralized space to work with expecting moms (and family) while in for four weeks for delivery. This should be built over the next two years.
- Received a grant of \$30 million over three years to target high risk teen girls with case management to decrease toxic stress & access services with a long term effect on pregnancies (delay in onset of childbearing & improved health for their pregnancy).
- New labor/delivery area is under construction.
- CCDF plan is being finalized after public input. It will be submitted on July 1st. In the Plan Connections around SEED, Professional Development, the ELGs, & QRIS are made to the AECCC recommendations.
- The C.C. Market Price Survey has been completed with an 86% response rate (the highest ever). This info will be used to set rates for CC assistance.
- New proposed federal requirements for CCDF are out. They include QRIS, and set out to be more family friendly & child focused. They are under review now looking to determine the costs of implementation.
- The QRIS position (grant funded) at thread is completing the interview process. The position will convene stakeholders meetings, and update Alaska's QRIS Plan and Standards in year one with a small implementation pilot in year two.
- Completed a three year grant to provide training to 70 some grantees on Trauma Informed Care. Developed a five hour training on the basics of TIC called the Trauma 101 Curricula. Seeking an additional 3 year grant to develop a training that targets responses to trauma for children & families.
- Concern over issues of flat funding in Medicaid.
- Federal changes in criteria for behavioral health services, including limiting to one hour per day of psychotherapy for young children.
- Discussion on local program policy change concerning children & families dealing with trauma. Programs are staying open when there is a funeral in the village to help the young children maintain routines and provide stability for the family.
- One program noted that after a local suicide the school provided counseling services for the children and attendance improved.
- It was noted that one predictor of childhood recovery to family trauma is the earlier the return to school.
- AASB, a nonprofit with 130 school district and superintendents members, is using the ICE initiative for community engagement. All school districts in the state are involved. Support for birth to five early learning is a focus of the organization. They are currently determining their role as we sort out pre-k and ECE as a state. They look to strengthen connections to families before they enter kindergarten. They developed Helping Little Kids Succeed Alaskan Style the early childhood companion to ICE. They are supporting early learning initiatives in the Dillingham and YK areas. They are now working with a

network for early learning to help educate their members and create resources. One of their five priorities is Early Childhood Development

- The new cribs project has provided 920 safer cribs across the state and provided safe sleep training for infant and toddler providers. Posters are available for programs and health centers, like six tips for safe sleeping for infants.
- Now finishing the first year of Roots, the five year wage incentive for underpaid early childhood workers pilot. They are working to improve wages and professional development for 52 folks this year. They are using the CLASS assessment as a quality improvement measure. This project adds approximately \$2080 to the annual wages of these 52 staff for year 1. Those who are successful and continue on with professional development activities through year two will see up to \$3800 added to their annual wage. Pilot participants must work in a licensed child care or qualifying Head Start program in Anchorage where they spend at least 20 hours per week working directly with children.
- Briefly brought up the Presidents' proposals for early childhood: CC/EHS, H.V., CCDBG, the new child care block grant and the universal pre-k for 4 year olds whose families are earning up to 200% of the poverty level.

Work Session:

The work session focused on the development of a data dashboard to quickly give key information on the work of the AECCC. We originally focused on the 60 indicator project, seeking to select the small handful that best described our work and could show success for children and families. The group used the recommendations to inform this work and decided to link data collections to each of the eight recommendations. A small set of these data pieces was suggested for each and a working group will clarify the selection and it will be sent out to the council.

Discussion on Council work & focus:

Bridging & Transition of:

- Alignment work and the state literacy plan, connectivity of ADP data to the K-3 literacy screening and connectivity from the TSG data to the ADP.
- Larger picture alignment of ELGs, TSG, & ADP with new state standards.
- AECCC work and ACT Mott Foundation Grant
- United way initiative
- Expansion of the inventory data work beyond the initial 9 program areas to include tribal cc & expanded data on school age cc and military cc and other ECL
- Develop school based network to include pre-k and pre-elementary

- Getting the AECCC strategic plan out to schools and communities around the state
- Use regular data to reflect on our work and guide decision making
- Define the state investment in EC & for what purposes (link to inventory info)
- Create an EC state budget
- Build data connectivity across ECL and link to K-12, Health, Social Services Labor and Workforce development.
- AECCC advocacy and the differing roles of our members
- How to get stakeholders to adopt the AECCC recommendations
- Possible presentation by AECCC to the AASB in September
- Develop connections with the PTA, Superintendents Association, The State Board, the Elementary Principals Association, as well as ECL entities and associations.
- Have an AECCC face at EC conferences
- Develop a dissemination plan for the Strategic Plan to include multiple forms of the material in the report (print, PowerPoint, talking points, etc.)

Day two focused on Trauma; its effects and how it can inform our interactions with children families and the systems that serve them. We are collecting the PowerPoint presentations and they will be provided to council members. Below are notes on comments from the presentations and the follow up discussions,

- Effects of toxic stress
- Reducing adverse events in the lives of children and their families
- Reframing the Nature verses Nurture debate (it is 100% of both in dynamic interaction all the time)
- The growing field of epigenetics, (handouts were provided copies are available)
- 10 specific adverse childhood experiences were put into a survey and the responses became the ACES study.
- Some stress is positive; it is manageable and motivational, some is negative and can build stress related electro chemical activity in the brain to a toxic level. With exposure to increasing numbers of the 10 ACEs the likelihood of developing any of a large variety of health, learning and social problems grows. That growth is at first additive, but as the number and types of exposure increases the likelihood increases almost exponentially.
- Looked at a number of studies from the Romanian orphanages study to multi-state data from the Washington State Family Policy Council, to data from an ongoing study in Anchorage.

The following are questions developed by the group as we began to discuss the cross system implementation of trauma informed care & education.

- How do we contextualize this information into our system?
- How do we De-silo our work, and how do we prepare our systems for de-siloing?
- How do we engage folks not of a like mind to this work?
- As we build our scope who else needs to be involved?
- As trauma disrupts development how do we put development back on track?
- What does Trauma informed health care look like?
- What do trauma informed teaching practices look like?
- For Alaska, what are TIC Best Practices?
- How do we develop an Alaskan ACES type screening?
- Who can help us in its development?