



Delaware Early Childhood Council

Meeting Minutes – September 27, 2017

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

University of Delaware – Carvel Research and Education Center
16483 County Seat Highway, Georgetown, DE 19947

Council Attendance: Madeleine Bayard, Rodel Foundation of Delaware; Heidi Beck, Delaware Head Start Association; Martha Buell, DIEEC; Cheryl Clendaniel, The Learning Center; Julie Johnson, Tender Loving Kare Child Care & Learning Centers; Kimberly Krzanowski, Office of Early Learning; Carrette Monsanto, Family Child Care Provider; Mary Moor, Prevention and Behavioral Health Services; Dr. Michelle Shaivitz, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children; Debbie Taylor, Child Care Aware of America; Kelli Thompson, Nemours Health and Prevention Services; Betty Gail Timm, Office of Child Care Licensing

Others in Attendance: Dawn Alexander, Jackie Anderson, David Blowman, Amy Bonner, Cindy Brown, Dr. Susan Bunting, Mollie Charnick, Casey Christophel, Veronica Commodore, Amanda Connor, Toni Dickerson, Tammy Dodd, Cheryl Doucette, Nancy Edwards, Daphne Evans, Sharon Farlow, John Fisher-Klein, Ed Freel, Diane Frentzel, Carmen Gallagher, Peggy Geisler, Caitlin Gleason, Kim Gomes, Ranie Good, Esther Graham, Paulina Gyan, Shebra Hall, Rena Hallam, Karen Hartz, Belvie Herbert, Tamira Holloway, Rita Hovermale, Christina Joe, Andria Keating, Evelyn Keating, Jim Kelly, Pam Kennedy, Kathy Moore, Trish Moses, Michele Munday, Joanna Murzyn, Quiana Rieves, Lin Nordmeyer, Christine Olley, Tammy Petrowicz, Andrea Prettyman, Eric Raser-Schramm, Dr. Tanya Robinson, Faith Scheibe, Karen Schreiber, Pat Belle-Scruggs, Marcie Shahan, Jon Sheehan, Crystal Sherman, Michelle Spencer, Kristy Sheffler, Tina Shockley, Jeannette Short, Donna Snyder-White, Maria Staman, Christine Stoops, Susan Strawbridge, Melanie Thomas-Price, Fiona Vivar, Stephanie Wagner, Daniel Walker, Jamie Walko, Melissa Walter, Angela Wilson, Kristina Woznicki, Linda Zankowsky

1. Welcome, Call to Order, Old Business

- Madeleine Bayard welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.
- Christine Olley welcomed the group to Sussex County and noted the partnership between the Sussex Early Childhood Council and State Council.
- Kathy Moore was recognized for her more than 40 years of service with a tribute from the Governor's office.

2. Approval of Minutes

- The July 25, 2017 Delaware Early Childhood Council meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

3. Stars/Tiered Reimbursement Community Discussion

- Kimberly Krzanowski of OEL, Amy Bonner of OMB, and Secretary of Education Susan Bunting discussed the budget process in regards to tiered reimbursement and Stars with the group.
 - John Sheehan, Governor's Education Policy Advisor, thanked the group for everything they do, and added that the Governor's office is fully committed to the work that this group does.

- **Budget Process Discussion**
 - FY18 was a very difficult budget year. There was a 400 million dollar gap in the state budget, some programs were reduced or completely eliminated. The stars program was looked at for reductions but the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) was able to “maintain” the funding with no growth.
 - OMB has committed to maintaining the programs currently in Stars at their current level, the programs that were in the queue have been approved.
 - OMB is currently in the planning stages of the FY19 budget.
 - The Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council (DEFAC) has met and revenue looks good right now for FY19, but that could change. DEFAC will take another look at the projected revenue and will be able to make forecasts for next year at their December 2017 meeting.
 - OMB is committed to the Stars program, but will not be able to allow any programs to grow within this current fiscal year (FY18).
 - Overview of the Budget Process - The Governor will present his recommended budget in January 2018. After the Governor makes his recommendations it goes through the Joint Finance Committee. OMB will then meet with joint finance, the budget goes through another markup and then it goes to the General Assembly in June 2018.
 - In last year’s recommended budget the door opener for tiered reimbursement was around 8 million dollars. We still were able to get an additional 4.7 million dollars to continue to fund the program and make up for one-time funds in the previous year’s budget. Even though a 2 million dollar cut was suggested, the final budget deal restored the original 4.7 million dollar ask.
 - A point on clarification was made that “maintaining” means maintenance of funding level. Maintain does not mean growth to OMB.
 - Even though OMB is unable to support growth this year they are committed to the Stars program and they understand the impacts.
 - The Council will work with OMB to find ways to invest and what the commitment is going forward.
 - Dr. Bunting added that state law requires a balanced budget and this depends on how much revenue is coming in, if there isn’t enough revenue then cuts have to be made. The Department of Education’s realizes that when children enter kindergarten, if they do not have a solid quality early childhood experience, they enter kindergarten behind.
- **Other concerns/comments from the community**
 - The Stars program was set up to be competitive and the early childhood educators are the lowest paid individuals. The administration needs to get more input on why early childhood education is so important. This is a multi-tiered complicated system and many people have worked hard to move through the star levels.
 - Who is at the decision making table for early childhood? There are a lot of internal DOE discussions which Kimberly Krzanowski and Dr. Bunting are involved in but these discussions are just once piece.
 - Kim K. has been with the Office of Early Learning (OEL) for 5 months and she has big goals on having community conversations with everyone. OEL is committed to the community and hearing their needs and concerns, this is a top priority.
 - There are three state departments that support different early learning activities which consist of the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families (Kids), The Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Education’s Office of Early Learning. The group needs to think about what goes on across these three departments because early learning goes beyond just Delaware Stars.

- It's time for us to be leaders in early learning, it's not about money, it's about policy decisions, governance and leadership.
- Budget and policy conversations need to be combined.
- Our children and families will thrive if we have the resources, wherever the cuts are made it has an effect on children.
- There are system problems that could cause programs to fall back to a star level 3 from a level 5. This could cause the programs to be stuck at the star level 3 because of the freeze.
- Purchase of Care (POC) is currently paid at the 2011 rate.
- High quality care is still expected with no new dollars.
- Stars has brought early childhood education to this state to the next level and improvements have been seen throughout the years.
- If the Star levels stay frozen, the POC children will not be able to stay within the high quality programs because of the cost. In turn, the providers will only be able to accept private pay children.
- Moving up in the star level is important but the recognition for the hard work is most important to providers.
 - The efforts of the star level earned needs to be recognized. This shows the recognition of quality.
- Jon Sheehan suggested for the Council to advise the administration on policy.

4. Sub-Committee Chair Report

- **Early Learning Data and policy**

- Data is needed to make the case for investment; gathering qualitative and quantitative data is important.
- The next data and policy meeting is December 7th. At this meeting they will discuss what a longitudinal data system would look like and strengthening their data systems.

- **Healthy Young Children and Families**

- MEICHV grants are up for re-authorization, we want to make sure that that the funding is maintained. The match requirement doesn't affect them but programs did take a 10 percent cut.
- The last meeting was held on September 30th and the next meeting is November 1st.

5. Sussex Early Childhood Council Updates

- Christine Olley gave update on the Sussex Early Childhood Council
 - They had ECCS Coin come to Sussex with the Sussex County Health Coalition, working on developmental screenings
 - They are partnering with Nanticoke to add a piece to the discharge papers so parents are informed about developmental screenings.
 - Working on partnerships – SECC & ELAT have merged together to push forward on some great initiatives. They are both working hard in Sussex County to make positive changes for children and families.

6. DEAEYC Updates

- Dr. Michelle Shaivitz gave updates on DEAEYC.
 - Michelle thanks and introduces her team.
 - Joanna Murzyn & Tamira Holloway – Support the WAGE\$ program. The WAGE\$ program helps to provide education-based salary supplements to under paid teachers, directors, administrators and family child care providers, working with children birth thru five. For more information please visit the DEAEYC website at: <https://deaeyc.org/wages-program/>.
 - Michelle Spencer and Maria Staman support the T.E.A.C.H. program. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Delaware provides scholarships for those working

in licensed early care and education (ECE) or school age program in Delaware. For more information please visit the DEAEYC website at:
<https://deaec.org/teach-early-childhood/>.

- There are public policy meetings held on a monthly basis, normally there are 10 or less individuals in attendance to this meeting. There are multiple invitations that are sent out, it's important for others to join these meetings.
 - DEAEYC will come out to events/centers/etc. to help them have a voice in investing in early learning. Please contact Eric or Michele to join advocacy efforts. You can also visit the DEAEYC advocacy portion of their website at <https://deaec.org/advocacy/>, to be added to their mailing list.
 - Michelle encouraged members of the Council to reach out directly to their legislators and provided a map to find your legislator and postcards to reach out.
- Several members of the Council and attendees mentioned how important individual, personal outreach to legislators will be with the legislative session and budget process coming.

7. Office of Early Learning (OEL) Updates

- Kimberly Krzanowski presented updated for the Office of Early Learning.
 - **Staffing Updates** – There are currently 3 vacant positions within OEL. The Head Start Collaboration position has been posted and it closes on October 5th. We hope to have it filled by the beginning of December, 2017. Kim is still currently serving as interim Head Start Collaboration Office Director.
 - **PD plan timeline update** – A group of individuals served on either a working or advisory group and from these groups recommendations were developed. The plan was to move forward this year but due to internal and external factors we are unable to release this year.
 - OEL is looking into hiring an implementation expert and we will hopefully start the process again this upcoming year. Even though we have taken a step back we still have ongoing DE-ELS trainings to help support kindergarten teachers and we are working with DIEEC on what PD will look like in the future.
 - W.K. Kellogg Foundation Grant – OEL applied for a grant through the W.K. Kellogg Foundation which includes the development of an infant toddler credential that can be used for the CDA requirements or can be put in to a degree program. Once approved there will be a cohort for each county, a program coach will work with the cohort/program members.
 - OEL is still waiting to receive clearing house approval. An announcement and RFP will be sent within the next couple of weeks for the program coach.
 - Stars Management Committee – Not a lot of movement within this committee. The current QRIS is up for revisions we are looking to bring a group of people together to start talking about options to improve the system. We are committed to reviewing DE early learning systems.

8. Future Meeting Topics, Additional Items and Close

- Community updates
 - Career and Technical Education has a position opening at Smyrna High School, the position is posted on their website.
 - Christine Olley, Lake Forest School District – Delaware Early Childhood Center is currently looking for consultants for nutrition, mental health and health services.
- Next Meeting – November 29, 2017
 - Location has moved to Colwyck Center – Resource Room
 - Address – 12 Landers Lane, New Castle, DE 19720
 - From 9:00AM-11:00AM

- October 24th is the next Sussex Early Childhood Council meeting at Easter seals in Georgetown.
- Madeleine Bayard adjourned the meeting at 11:58AM