

IRMC Extended Learning Opportunities Subcommittee
Draft Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2020
5:00 - 6:30 P.M.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

The IRMC Extended Learning Opportunities Subcommittee is established to oversee coordination, research, and planning statewide for before and after school and summer learning programs for school-age children and advise the General Assembly and the Governor.

Attendees: Candice Buchanan, Tiyana Prince, Tina Shockley, Michele Savage, Connie Merlet, John Hulse, Teresita Cuevas, John Fisher-Klein, Chris Kelly, Laurie Sisk

The Chair began the fifth meeting of the Extended Learning Opportunities Subcommittee Meeting at 5:06 p.m. by welcoming all members who had joined the call. There were three public members on the call – Teresita Cuevas, Laurie Sisk and Chris Kelly – but none of them wanted to make official public comment during the Public Comment period when offered.

There was not a quorum present so the minutes of the February 18 and April 21 meetings were not approved.

The Chair noted that since ELOS members will be making a recommendation on standards, it is a good idea for us to hear about the Delaware Stars standard revision process that is underway. We want to ensure that our recommendation aligns with their standards and that efforts are not duplicated. Next, John Fisher-Klein gave a presentation on the Delaware Stars Revision process that is currently underway. The presentation included an overview of the five components of Delaware's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), its current structure (consisting of three pillars and eight standards) and the proposed new structure. The original timeline for the revisions process was to occur between now and January 2021, but John noted that COVID-19 has impacted this timeline. The presentation also included a list of members on the Leadership Team and Advisory Council, who will be the individuals considering and making recommendations regarding the updated standards.

John Hulse asked if there is any consideration being given as a part of the Delaware Stars revision process to increase the age from 12 years to 18 years. John said no, as they currently only focus up to age 12. However, he will take that feedback to the Advisory Council for consideration.

John suggested he return to the group in a few months once the Leadership Team and Advisory Council have flushed out the standards more and identified expectations. It may be easier at that point to identify Delaware Stars standards and to discuss standards ELOS may wish to recommend.

The Chair noted that the group would be interested in hearing what stakeholder feedback John receives. Also, ELOS members would be willing to share their expertise and knowledge to

assist in the revision process. Working collaboratively will allow for consistent standards for all ages. It would be ideal to have all guidance in one place. We anticipate having John provide an update at a future meeting.

Connie Merlet noted that the current Delaware Stars standards are based heavily on OCCL regulations (known as [DELACARE Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers](#) and for [Family and Large Family Child Care Homes](#)) that only go up to age 12. She noted they would be included in the minutes so all ELOS members could review them. The Chair indicated that we could still recommend the Delaware Stars standards as guidance or best practice. (Note: These regulations will be updated soon.)

The Chair indicated that to date she has been unable to line up someone from OCCL to come and speak at an upcoming ELOS meeting. As an action item, she will try to schedule them to speak at a future meeting. She noted this is important to ensure we are aligning our standards and to identify where discrepancies occur.

John Hulse noted that many school age programs go beyond age 12 and up to age 18. It is important to ensure there are set standards for the upper end age group that are not under Delaware Stars regulations.

Connie indicated that it would be great if Delaware Stars adds the upper age group. However, if they don't increase the age their standards cover, then they shouldn't call it school-aged. The group agreed that we need to address the age issue and ensure terminology is understood. Providers want to come to one place for guidance. Hopefully, our recommendation on this will help with that alignment.

The Chair asked if anyone had any other items for group discussion. John Hulse noted that the Delaware Afterschool Network is happy to help out where they can. Teresita noted that it may be a good idea to get representatives from all programs in one room so that we can clarify regulations and align our thoughts on expanding the age. Members agreed this would be good.

The Chair turned the group's attention to the COVID-19 impact on extended learning opportunity program funding. She is already seeing funding impacts within SummerCollab and the nonprofit provider community due to COVID-19. The Chair suggested we can expect to see funding moved around for programs, which ultimately means less funding for extended learning opportunity programs. She further noted we can expect this to occur more long-term than short-term.

She also noted Governor Carney and Sec. Bunting recently [announced working groups to plan for the safe return to school](#) this fall. They have identified specific working groups to look at health/wellness, academic/equity, and operations/services. She indicated the first working group meeting will occur this Thursday, May 21 at 2 p.m. She encouraged everyone to become familiar with the work of the working groups as it will help us better understand what schools are doing, which may impact our recommendations.

No other business was conducted and the meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.