



Friday, May 5, 2017
Public Meeting 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

An un-official public meeting of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) was held on Friday, May 5, 2017, at Sunny Days Early Childhood Development Services in Manalapan, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:11 by Rosemary Browne, who served as Chair Pro Tem and declared that a quorum was not present.

Attendance - Maintained by the SICC

Welcome - Rosemary Browne, co-chair of the Family Support Committee welcomed attendees. At her request, SICC members and public members introduced themselves and identified their connection with early intervention.

Approval of Minutes: The review and approval of the March 17, 2017 minutes were postponed for the September 2017 SICC meeting due to lack of quorum.

Lead Agency – Department of Health (DOH) for the New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS)

1. Procedural Safeguard Report (PSO)

The PSO received two (2) formal complaints since the last SICC meeting. One was an administrative complaint related to service coordination responsibilities and the second was a request for a due process hearing and mediation resulting from missed services. Both requests were withdrawn by the family and resolved informally by the Procedural Safeguards Office (PSO). To date the number of informal complaints received for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017 is 5,171. The majority of the complaints were related to missed services, services not being timely provided, or services that were disrupted.

The PSO issued findings related to an allegation of Fraud, Waste, and Abuse against a practitioner. The practitioner was found to have submitted fraudulent service claims. The practitioner was placed on the banned list and is disqualified from working with the NJEIS. The practitioner's agency was required to reimburse NJEIS for the cost of the services and to conduct a staff training to review relevant NJEIS policies and procedures. The appropriate parties were notified.

2. Family Cost Participation (FCP)

A detailed FCP report was sent to the SICC members prior to the meeting. NJEIS remains on target for collections based on a projection of \$7.2 million. Approaching suspension remains consistent. The new data system will provide a family portal for cost participation payments via credit card and bank transfers.

3. Early Intervention Management System (EIMS) Update

NJEIS state staff are participating in weekly conference calls to review and approve business requirements for the NJEIS EIMS. Challenges in the development include how to manage family cost participation with multiple children participating in NJEIS within one household, households with changing family members, how to allow for make-up services while insuring that services are provided in accordance with the duration, intensity, frequency, and length agreed to under the IFSP. The updated system will allow for greater flexibility to change practitioners. Rosemary Browne noted that their current system allows number of units per authorization. Under discussion is managing missed services when the system is the reason a service was missed.

4. Federal Application for FFY17

NJEIS FFY2017 Part C application was submitted timely. The Federal government has approved a continuing resolution to keep the FFY 2016 federal government budget through September 30, 2017. DOH received a new allocation amount since the application was submitted that resulted in a decrease of several thousand dollars due to the census formula used to distribute funding.

5. NJ SFY 18 Budget

NJEIS received supplemental funding in the amount of 7.3 million dollars for SFY17 and a proposed increase in the state appropriation for SFY 18. SFY18 NJEIS budget includes a \$103 million appropriation which may not be sufficient if the bi-weekly check runs continue to increase. The SFY 2017 average bi-weekly check run is running at \$5.5 million. It was noted that there seems to be a slight decrease in service costs over recent check runs. However, the birth rate in NJ has increased slightly which may result in increased referrals to NJEIS.

6. State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

Fidelity training for targeted evaluation team (TET) members developed by Kristen Kugelman and Jennifer Blanchette McConnell is being conducted by Dr. McConnell. Every county TET has been scheduled to participate. The training includes an in-depth review of data completeness (exit evaluation data) for each county and fidelity of “little e” (children who enter and exit with peers in the social emotional domain) which remains too high. NJEIS is emphasizing retention of TET members as it costs approximately \$700 to train 1 new TET practitioner. In addition to the fidelity trainings, NJEIS arranged for 7 BDI trainings with Riverside to train new TET members to increase the number of evaluators. 175 new evaluators will be trained and available to conduct BDI’s by June 2017. NJEIS is conducting quarterly meetings with TET administrators with the next meeting occurring in June. The use of secondary tools to justify clinical opinion will be a primary focus. The new Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator (T&TA) for the Northeast REIC, Ciera Miller, is examining the tools currently utilized by TET in addition to the BDI.

NJEIS is collaborating with Montclair State University (MSU) and the Keeping Babies and Children in Mind (KBCM) training to develop an “Introduction to Social Emotional Development” training module. Record Reviews will be conducted to measure frequency and consistency of social emotional development in Individualized Service Plans (IFSP’s) through review of outcomes, strategies, and key words. The challenges are how to reach all practitioners to ensure information is disseminated and evidenced based practices are integrated throughout early intervention via a cadre of coaches.

7. **SICC Committee Reports**

Administrative – Chanel McDevitt presented and shared a draft FY18 budget in the amount of \$36,000 as per the REIC grant application line item for the SICC. The council was unable to vote on the proposed budget due to lack of quorum. The SFY19 draft budget will be presented during the January 2018 meeting to allow for adequate discussion of reallocating budgeted items to more accurately represent the priorities and expenses of the SICC while reducing the budget to \$30,000.

Early Learning Challenge – Barbara Tkach presented. Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant is ending December 31, 2017 unless a 1 year, no cost, extension is approved to help with sustainability of projects. The grant currently funds multiple projects including: Grow NJ Kids Quality Rating Improvement System, Central Intake Hubs, County Councils for Young Children, and the statewide training. There has been an interdepartmental discussion regarding suspension and expulsion of young children with special needs from preschool and childcare settings. NJEIS provides an early opportunity to address social emotional behaviors so that children who enter childcare and preschool are successful

Family Support: Co-chair Patti Ciccone. No update.

Service Delivery: Joyce Salzberg shared minutes from the most recent meeting on 4/19/17. The committee will be meeting again on 5/22/17. Terry Harrison would like the committee to submit proposed recommendations to SICC members by early September 2017 so that discussion and a vote is an agenda item for the September SICC meeting (if possible). DOH is interested in moving forward with RFA development.

REIC Update: Jennifer Buzby and Susan Marcario, REIC Directors and members of the Family Directed Assessment Workgroup presented on the Initial and Annual Family Directed Assessment Interview Tool.

8. **Old Business:**

July 2017 retreat planning: A small committee has begun work to plan the annual retreat. Two conference calls with Kate Colucci, Sharon Walsh, Michelle Christopoulos and Terry Harrison have occurred. The retreat will take place on July 21, 2017 at the Sunny Days office in Manalapan from 9am to 3pm. The meeting will begin with networking, introductions, and an ice breaker. The agenda will also include a “refresher” on the topic of ethics provided by Rachel Hammond, DOH Ethics Officer. This will also fulfill SICC members requirement for their annual ethics review as a Special State Officer. Specific questions related to ethics should be sent to Terry Harrison. A working lunch will be provided. Afternoon discussion will be focused on identifying SICC priorities, activities and committee work for the coming year. A discussion and possible revision of the NJEIS mission statement is also proposed for the retreat.

9. **New Business:** None

10. **Public Comment:**

- Marty Reynolds asked the name of company designing the new data system.
- Carolyn Russo asked about the type of electronic devices will providers be using in field.
- Terry Harrison responded to questions related to the MIS system: Public Consulting Group (PCG) is the new vendor for the EIMS. The work of NJEIS by practitioners will move from paper to electronic entry into the EIMS which will require practitioner to have laptops, tablets, smart phones and internet access. There are no specific hardware

requirements because practitioners will login to a web-based system. The EIMS is still in a design stage and will move to prototype development over the summer with testing beginning in September. There will be new enrollment with PCG. The EIMS access will open to agencies and practitioners once assigned to a family. DOH anticipates cost savings to agencies related to billing, filing, paper, copying, time spent mailing etc. Agencies will be responsible for ensuring that staff have access to the internet and may consider securing "hot spots" with access to satellite connections. DOH is not recommending a specific type of device. There may be concerns with connecting to the new data system for some agencies such as hospitals and county offices. Training and technical assistance will be available from PCG related to the EIMS but not individual agency security questions.

- Patti Carlesimo questioned whether SCU's and REIC's are permitted to close for a period of time during the summer? Terry Harrison clarified that the NJEIS contracts require that agencies operate a minimum of 48 weeks with no more than a one-week closure at a time. Agencies must have a plan in place to meet needs and timelines when closed.
- The July 1, 2017 timeline for TET's to include an early childhood specialist on each initial evaluation is approaching. DOH will look at trend to determine if there are compliance concerns. Agencies need to make a best effort to shift the TET workforce to comply. All exit evaluations should now be done with early childhood practitioners and not therapists. To allow for some additional transition time, DOH has reduced the reimbursement rate of discipline specific practitioners to the same rate as specialists if they complete the exit.

Adjourned- 1:25 pm

Upon motion and unanimously carried.

Approved – September 29, 2017