



**Friday, March 17, 2017**  
**Sunny Days Early Childhood Developmental Services**  
**Public Meeting 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

An official public *meeting* of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) was held on Friday, March 17, 2017, at Sunny Days Early Childhood Development Services in Manalapan, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m. by Catherine Colucci, Acting Chair and declared a quorum was present.

**ATTENDANCE** – Maintained by the SICC

**WELCOME** – Catherine Colucci, Acting Chair

Ms. Colucci welcomed attendees. At her request, SICC members and public members introduced themselves and identified their connection with early intervention.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes of January 27, 2017 was made by Michelle Christopoulos, seconded by Rosemary Browne and carried. The minutes were unanimously approved.

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

**1. Procedural Safeguard Report (PSO)**

The PSO received one (1) formal complaint since the last SICC meeting. The number of SFY 2017 informal requests to date total 4,176. Most of the informal complaints are related to missed services, services not being provided timely or services that were disrupted. Two (2) allegations of Fraud, Waste, Abuse are under investigation. Beth Lohne and Barbara Massey King continue to support the efforts of the PSO seeking guidance from Nashon Hornsby, Chief of Operations and Assistant Commissioner Lisa Asare.

**2. Family Cost Participation (FCP)**

Detailed FCP report was sent to the SICC members prior to the meeting. NJEIS is on target for collections based upon projections. Account suspended data is not unusual. Many families reconcile the overdue payment and are removed from suspension quickly.

**3. Early Intervention Management System (EIMS) Update**

DOH, NJEIS Staff and selected stakeholders met with the new EIMS vendor, Public Consulting Group (PSG) for 7 full days in February to discuss the design of the new central management office (CMO). The Request for Proposal (RFP), business requirements and possible modifications and additions were reviewed and discussed. Additional stakeholders will be consulted as development and testing moves forward. The new EIMS will be web based and provide additional access and permissions to all levels of participants in addition to increasing accountability. General overview of the EIMS: Referral and System Point of Entry (SPOE) SCs will initiate the electronic record, enter referral info, assign to a Targeted Evaluation Team (TET), the TET will assign the NJEIS evaluator(s), enter

evaluation results and, if eligible, the SPOE SC will assign to the county SCU, and the SCU will assign an ongoing SC. Proposed is that the current broadcast listing should be generated as a report. The SCU will assign the EIP and the EIP will have access to assign and reassign practitioners without having to change an authorization.

#### **4. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Audit Update**

Terry Harrison participated in a final briefing with the OMB task force team conducting the NJEIS audit. OMB noted that NJEIS has a complement of adequate checks and balances in place but did identify a few concerns. A draft report was presented for reviewed. It must be noted that this draft report is not available to the public and cannot be distributed. The audit included a review of Medicaid, Family Cost Participation, NJEIS Eligibility, REIC's and a review of child/family records. Costs related to Early Intervention (EI) week were questioned and discussed. The REIC's have already been informed that the budget for EI week needs to be more transparent as federal dollars fund the SICC and therefore the EI week. OMB had no specific concerns related to EI week activities and nothing specific was noted in the draft report.

OMB developed an understanding of the significant rules and regulations related to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and noted the barriers that impact on possible changes. This included pursuing the use of private insurance and restrictions against requiring families provide social security numbers or enroll with Medicaid. OMB did recommend that NJEIS begin collecting Medicaid numbers, and obtain and maintain family cost participation documentation submitted by families.

OMB conducted a random sample of FCP records and compared family reported wages with the NJ Department of Labor and Wages quarterly reports for the same time-period. The comparison found that 52 out of 147 families had incomes higher than what was reported to NJEIS. 18 of 52 families should have had a co-pay but did not because of under reporting of income. OMB projected that NJEIS could potentially collect 80% additional funding if accurate reporting of income was improved. NJEIS will be working with labor and wages to establish procedures to verify parents working in NJ. NJEIS does not have access to labor and wage information for parents working out of state.

OMB also looked at the Battelle Developmental Inventory results for initial evaluations for 40 children. Of the 40 records, 16 had questionable eligibility and 5 children did not meet eligibility criteria. OMB then reviewed child records for children determined eligible by clinical opinion and found additional assessment and justifications questionable. DOH has already acted to address concerns by releasing NJEIS-011 policy and procedures which requires any child determined eligible by clinical opinion must include additional assessment using a secondary tool, and must have new BDI completed by a 6-month periodic review to determine continued eligibility. The updated policy went into effect April 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **5. Federal Application for FFY 17**

NJEIS FFY 2017 Part C application is available on the DOH website for public comment through April 15, 2017 at <http://nj.gov/health/fhs/eis/index.shtml>. The application is based on last year's funding level pending the FFY17 budget which has not been passed.

#### **6. December 1 Count**

NJEIS submitted the December 1, 2016 federal child count. There was an 8.71% increase in the number of children birth to three with an active IFSP (13,579) on December 1, 2016. The SFY 2016 annual cumulative active IFSP count is 26,025 which is an 8.51% increase over SFY 2015 (23,985).

#### **7. The SFY 2017 45 Day Timeline Desk Audit**

Documented that 99.76% of children had an initial IFSP's within 45 days. A copy of the Part C Indicator 7- 45-day timeline report was distributed to the NJEIS provider agencies and SICC membership.

**8. Assembly Bill #ACR 233:**

Representatives Troy Singleton and Marilyn Lampitt have introduced a bill to the NJ Assembly requiring NJEIS to serve at-risk children. EI is not required to serve at risk under Part C of IDEA. PA has implemented screening and tracking for at-risk children, but children must meet eligibility criteria to receive early intervention services. Developmental screening and tracking for all young children would increase the identification of children eligible for Part C and Part B services.

**9. State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)**

A presentation and update on the status of the NJEIS SSIP (SP/APR Indicator 11) was shared with the SICC. The SSIP is due for submission by April 3, 2017 to the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

**10. NJ SFY18 Budget**

A summary of the Governor's proposed budget is available, but the budget details had not been released. The Department of Health SFY 2018 budget hearings are scheduled for the Senate on April 20th at 10 am and Assembly on May 10<sup>th</sup> at 10 am.

**SICC Committee Reports**

- 1. Administrative** – Channel McDevitt presented. The committee met prior to the SICC meeting. Looking at reducing the total SICC budget from \$36,000 to \$30,000 taking in consideration the concerns expressed by OMB and the continual unexpended funds. A draft budget will be emailed to the council prior to the next meeting in anticipation of a vote on the FY18 budget during the May SICC meeting. Also, the committee is working to identify clerical support during the absence of Terrie Goeke.
- 2. Early Learning Challenge** -- Barbara Tkach, Chair- no report
- 3. Family Support** – Patti Ciccone and Rosemary Browne, Co-Chairs – no update
- 4. Service Delivery** – Joyce Salzberg, Chair: Committee has met twice since last SICC meeting. Committee minutes were shared with the council.

**Old Business**

- July 2017 Retreat Planning: Terry Harrison announced that Sharon Ringwalt is retiring from the Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) project, but Sharon Walsh will be available to facilitate the retreat. A retreat planning workgroup was established. Catherine Colucci, Terry Harrison, and Michell Christopoulos agreed to work with Sharon Walsh to develop the agenda and activities of the retreat. A suggestion was made to include a social/networking activity to kick-off the retreat.
- Kate Colucci has been in touch with Suzanne Burnette to present on Head Start at an SICC meeting. Ms. Burnette was interested but was unavailable until the May or September meeting.
- Kate Colucci mailed a cover letter and ABCD letter to DOH Commissioner Bennett.

**New Business:**

The REIC Family Support Coordinators Desiree Bonner, Northeast REIC; Shakira Linzey, Mid Jersey Cares REIC and Carmela Balacco, Family Link REIC presented on REIC Child Find/Public Awareness activities.

**Public Comment:**

Cynthia Newman, REIC Director of Mid-Jersey Cares reported that during the initial referral call, information related to family cost participation is discussed with families and information is provided on the sliding scale fee. Targeted Evaluation Teams leave suggestions and strategies for families even if their child is not determined to be eligible at the initial evaluation.

**Adjournment** - 1:16 pm

Upon motion to adjourn from Chanel McDevitt and Steve Weiss and unanimously carried.

**Next meeting – May 19, 2017**  
**Sunny Days Early Childhood Development Services**  
**300 Corporate Center Drive, Manalapan, NJ**

**Approved** – September 29, 2017