

MEETING SUMMARY
May 20, 2016

An unofficial public *meeting* of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council was held on Friday, May 20, 2016, at Sunny Days Early Childhood Development Services in Manalapan, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order at 11:15 a.m. by Rosemary Browne, who served as Chair Pro Tem and declared a quorum was *not* present. Therefore, no official actions could be taken today.

ATTENDANCE -- *Attached*

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Rosemary Browne, Chair Pro Tem

Ms. Browne welcomed attendees. At her request, SICC members and 20 public members introduced themselves and identified their connection with early intervention.

Ms. Browne shared comments from Acting Chair Catherine Colucci related to the early intervention conference held on May 17, 2016: “The statewide conference for early intervention practitioners was a huge hit. People were enthusiastically participating. Susan Evans provided an overview to attendees on the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and the State Identified Measureable Result (SIMR), most of which I think was new information for them. The speakers engaged the group on two of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) recommended practices around social emotional development. Learning to coach parents and caregivers was emphasized. I got the feeling most do this only partially and that more training in this area is indicated. I hope we do it again next year.”

LEAD AGENCY -- **New Jersey Department of Health (DOH)**

Terry Harrison, Part C Coordinator, presented the following on behalf of the Lead Agency:

1. ***New Assistant Commissioner*** -- It is expected that newly appointed *Lisa Asare* will be recommended to the Governor’s Office as the Department of Health designated member of the Council replacing Gloria Rodriguez.
2. ***Procedural Safeguards Office (PSO)*** -- There were no formal complaints since the last Council meeting. PSO continues to receive informal contacts/complaints, totaling 4,174 for the fiscal year thus far. Contacts are generally related to no provider/practitioner available (NPA), service disruptions, requests for compensatory services and other general information. Atlantic County continues to have a significant NPA challenges. NPA responsibility has been shifted from the REIC level to the NJEIS PSO to improve data tracking and resolution efforts. A new EIP assignment broadcast list procedure is currently being implemented, and PSO is receiving calls related to technical assistance. A new PSO coordinator has not yet been named.
3. ***Family Cost Participation (FCP)*** -- A report was emailed to the Council prior to the meeting (attached to file). There were no questions from the members. As of May 4, 2016, FCP revenue totals \$5,330,000 with a monthly collection average of \$524,587. This should result in a projected \$6.3 to \$6.5 million FCP collection for the SFY.

4. **Annual Performance Report (APR)** – The Department of Education, Office of Special Education (OSEP) clarification period was in April 2016. NJ Part C had no requests for clarification on the submitted APR. The resulting state Part C determinations will not be released until June.
5. **Federal Fiscal Year 2016 Part C Application** – Only one public comment was received from SPAN and Family Voices NJ. Comments were in general supportive with concerns raised about Family Cost Participation and a recommendation to revise the eligibility criteria to serve at risk infants. The comments did not result in an application change which was submitted by April 21, 2016.
6. **State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)** -- The SSIP was submitted by the April 1, 2016 timeline, and can be found at http://www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/eis/documents/indicator_12_attachment.pdf.
7. **Statewide NJEIS Conference** – *Department of Health, Acting Commissioner, Cathleen Bennett* attended and spoke about the importance of early intervention. Just under 300 NJEIS practitioners attended the conference which was focused on social emotional development and the importance of family engagement and supporting families so they are competent and confident. The presenters shared powerful videos depicting different types of family engagement with the attendees. Electronic polling was included in the conference, which enabled NJEIS to gather a variety of baseline data related to implementation of the SSIP. Practitioners reported they would like more information and training related to coaching and social emotional (SE) development.
8. **Family Engagement**-- On May 5, 2016, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released a joint policy statement on the implementation of effective family engagement practices in early childhood programs. It is the Departments' position that strong family engagement is central to promoting children's healthy development, school readiness, and academic achievement in elementary school and beyond. The Joint policy statement can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/families.html>.

SICC COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. **Administrative** -- The SICC SFY 2017 budget was not presented because of lack of quorum. It will be presented for discussion and approval at the September meeting.
2. **Early Learning Challenge** -- No report. Committee Chair Barbara Tkach was unable to attend.
3. **Family Support** -- Patti Ciccone, Committee Co-Chair, shared the status of "Measuring Child and Family Outcomes" flyer. Family Support Coordinators from REIC's assisted with gathering feedback on the flyer from two to three families per region. The feedback was incorporated into the final draft and submitted to DOH. The committee has been impressed with the process, especially the web-based family focus groups.
4. **Service Delivery** -- Chair Joyce Salzberg reported on the committee's meetings and progress made on developing Early Intervention Program Provider Competency Standards modeled after the National System Framework of the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. The committee requested that the document be reviewed and recommendations discussed at the SICC retreat in July. The Committee will be requesting that the SICC endorse the competencies and submission to the DOH with a recommendation that the document be released for public comment and be the basis for any future competitive request for applications of the service delivery network of Early Intervention Program provider agencies.

REIC UPDATE -- Cynthia Newman presented for the REIC's reporting on 2016 Early Intervention Week. She shared information related to the remaining Early Intervention Week activities, and encouraged members of the Council to attend the Walk and Roll taking place on Saturday, May 21st, at Johnson Park in North Brunswick. The Family Support Coordinators will present a full report to the Council in September.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **July 22nd Retreat Planning** -- The SICCC Service Delivery Committee recommended using approximately one hour of the retreat to present and discuss the NJEIS System Framework work on EIP Competencies. The DOH requested that the remainder of the retreat day be used to continue the work of advising and assisting the lead agency with the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Next steps in SSIP, includes implementation of the Evaluation Plan and ongoing work on Family Engagement. Reminder that the retreat is not a public meeting but is for SICCC members and invited participants. Location of the retreat will be Sunny Days Early Childhood Development Services in Manalapan.
2. **Exit Evaluation Teams** are in the process of being identified and additional practitioners will be trained in the month of June.

NEW BUSINESS -- There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. **Lori Schaefer of Inspira EIP** ... Asked the timeframe for implementation of Exit Targeted Evaluation Teams (TET's). Ms. Harrison responded that NJEIS is close to making final decisions and hopes to announce them in the next few weeks. A period of transition will occur during the remainder of the calendar year.
2. **David Holmes of the Alliance for the Betterment of Citizens with Disabilities (ABC) Early Intervention Provider association (EIPA)**
 - a. *Asked if TET's will be provided with additional computers and BDI kits.* Ms. Harrison said that the NJEIS will continue to support these needs, however, some TETs will already have available kits and computers. NJEIS will be reviewing TET inventory and potential needs.
 - b. Suggested goals be established for the SICCC in the next year to address issues and strategies.
 - c. *Asked if there was any update on the Central Management Office RFA.* Ms. Harrison said it is still pending with Treasury.
 - d. Requested help in understanding the NPA issue; how data is collected. Ms. Harrison said that in order to be considered timely, services must be initiated within 30 days of the IFSP. The EIP Assignment Broadcast List tracks services that go beyond 30 days and SCUs are responsible to submit NPA paperwork to the PSO. The PSO continually monitors and assists with resolving NPA with families. A significant issue is a challenge to having accurate data on NPA is the failure of EIPs to submit actual start date information in a timely fashion. Delayed submission of actual start dates can contribute to a false number of NPAs being tracked and potentially could result in a child's services not being implemented or implemented timely. NPA can and does change quickly and frequently. If one practitioner with a high caseload leaves without or little notice, it can result in a high NPA in a particular area or discipline. Often, by the time NPA paperwork is received, it has already been resolved. This is not an issue of insufficient EIP

agencies but an issue of available practitioners. Another factor is whether IFSP teams are appropriately using limited resources when considering service type, frequency and intensity needs. Atlantic County has a shortage of discipline specific practitioners.

3. **Donna Castellano of Cerebral Palsy of North Jersey ...**
 - a. Asked if It is feasible for an individual practitioner to serve an entire county; the method of receiving assignments differs by county; can DOH help unify the method of responding to the EIP Assignment Broadcast List. Ms. Harrison replied that the state recently did create a statewide Broadcast list format and process but there are unique differences in how EIPs respond which would be difficult to standardize giving the system Service Coordination Units have implemented. One example is the SNJ Perinatal Cooperative covering five counties has a data system where EIPs can respond. She suggested that Ms. Castellano bring her concern related to assignment procedure to the local level.
 - b. Raised concerns about families with scheduling challenges can hold up EIP assignments. Ms. Harrison reminded her that requests to bypass children must be submitted to PSO.
 - c. Concern that the PSO was not continuing to schedule NPA conference calls. The REIC's requested to take this on and are authorized to conduct conference calls as appropriate. The REIC can request participation by the PSO as needed keeping in mind that the office is without a Procedural Safeguards Coordinator. Some children may need to be re-evaluated to determine current needs. IFSP teams should be considering consultation along with other methods of service provision.
4. **Karen Olanrewaju of Sunny Days ...** Asked If there is going to be an expansion of virtual services, since the coaching concept is useful in EI. Ms. Harrison said that current virtual services have not proving to be successful, as families are not accepting of methodology for receiving a service. DOH cannot open up virtual throughout the State until standards are in place.
5. **Lori Schaefer of Inspira EIP...**said that Cumberland County has a limited number of practitioners/resources. Service coordinators do a very effective job of discussing the option of virtual services with families; provider agencies are also in support of virtual services.
6. **Cynthia Newman of Helpful Hands REIC ...** Commented that the State has now unified the spreadsheet so every county has the same data. The model of EI to empower and engage the family is not always understood.
7. **Peter Chen of Association for Children of New Jersey ...** Said that lead poisoning issues are being looked at by ACNJ. He asked in what ways does early intervention intersect with lead abatement programs; are there ways to be more pro-active related to lead issues. Ms. Harrison responded that lead exposure is an "at risk" factor. NJEIS can create a "Did you Know" related to lead exposure information that can assist and will include lead as a non-required service that may need to be reviewed with families when conducting the Family Directed Assessment (FDA) and possibly IFSP development. She also suggested that the 21 Family County Councils may be a good source to contact and discuss steps to address lead-related issues. She also encouraged anyone who has suggestions or would like to discuss the topic further to email Mr. Chen at PCHEN@ACNJ.org.

ADJOURNMENT -- 12:36

Upon motion by Michele Safrin, seconded by Joseph Holahan and unanimously carried.

APPROVED

9.23.16