

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission
April 15, 2014 – 10:00 am
Minutes

Members Present: Evelyn Bass, Jackie Dedman, Amy Denton, Glenda Ezell, Nickie Hammontree, Patricia Lucas, Debbie Malone, Marsha Masters, Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price, Dr. Chad Rodgers, Dr. Haley Vo, and Jody Veit-Edrington

Members Absent: Marilyn Chambers, Ava Coleman, Janice Dancer, Dr. Jill Fussell, Diane Green, Gene Gregory, Shirley Pulliam, Barbara Warren and Dr. Tracy Tucker

I. Call to Order/Reading of Mission Statement

- a. Jackie Dedman called the AECC meeting to order at 10:04 am on 4/15/14.
- b. Jackie Dedman started the commission by reading three quotes. One from John F. Kennedy, the other from Frederick Douglas and the last quote came from an anonymous source.
- c. Jackie Dedman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and then read the AECC mission statement.
- d. Introductions from the Committee and attendees followed.
- e. Jackie Dedman made a motion to add to the agenda the KRIC (Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Committee) work to old business. The motion to add came from Jody Veit-Edrington and seconded by Dr. Chad Rodgers. The motion carried, 4/15/14.
- f. A quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2014

- a. The minutes from the January 21st meeting was approved at this meeting.
- b. Motion to approve came from Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price and seconded by Evelyn Bass. The motion carried, 4/15/14.

III. Old Business

- a. Standing Committees: Finance, Appeals, Nominating and Better Beginnings Appeals. Jackie asked for updates on the above committees. Jackie Dedman/David Griffin advised that members are still being selected for the Appeals committee. No other updates were given.
- b. Better Beginnings/QRIS: Vicki Mathews gave Better Beginnings update. She advised that 30 programs have enrolled in 2014 already, 150 programs within the last year. She stated there has been a lot of work behind the scenes. The numbers indicate that 44% of all licensed facilities

are Better Beginnings and 18% of homes. The homes have shown the larger percentage increase. Vicki talked about ways her team is improving the efficiency of processing applications. She also discussed the impact of the voucher requirement.

- i. Dr. Chad Rogers ask about barriers from Level 1 to Level 3. Vicki advised that the assessments requirements and increased professional development requirements may be a challenge.
 - ii. Jody Veit-Edrington asked if most L3 providers are ABC and if the private providers just have not had time to move through the system? Vicki advised yes.
 - iii. Vicki advised that there is an uptrend to L2.
 - iv. Micca Burris discussed the incentives and talked about the data.
 - v. Paige Cox asked about impact of the participant agreement and commented this is a big change for vouchers? Vicki stated that meeting L1 requirements is a requirement before accepting vouchers. She also stated that this new requirement has been an incentive for some providers that meet L1 requirements but have not previously participated.
 - vi. Jackie Dedman asked about work on L4 and L5? Micca stated that a structure is currently being created and they have been meeting with other states.
- c. Licensing Rule Revision/Update: Ratha Tracy gave an update on Rule Revision. She stated that the economic statement was complete. She discussed that process. She also stated that help came from the Child Care Bureau in Dallas. Ratha advised that she has asked other staff in the division to look at the draft document of the proposed licensing requirements. Ratha also advised that the Promulgation Policy has been revised by the state, and that the team working on rule revision is closely reviewing the new policy. She advised of the upcoming task that still needs to be complete for the promulgation process, which includes: making sure what is filed is on time, running it by the Office of Chief Council, posting copies of the proposed regulation is online, completing the summary of changes, public hearings and information regarding hearings is in the paper. Ratha advised that the formal promulgation process is to begin within the next 2 weeks. David Griffin advised that he should have a summary to the commission by next meeting or before.
- i. Tonya Williams advised the AECC members that she encourages the commission members to attend the public hearings. She also talked about how she advised the rule revision team to add language about staff/child ratio. She discussed the importance of

selecting key individuals to support these new regulations at the Capitol.

- ii. David advised it is important to share this information, the fact that it is good for people in the field to attend the hearings and it is good to have providers heard in the Legislative Committees.
 - iii. Dr. Chad Rodgers asked about the legislative committee and if the new regulations are “hot topics?” Tonya talked about the presentations she has given to the legislative committee. She talked about how some of the members of the committee are leaving and new people are becoming a part of that committee. She also spoke about how three gubernatorial candidates have contacted her and has an interest in early childhood as a platform for their campaigns.
- d. Child Health and Nutrition: Dr. William Lackey gave an update. He stated that every three years the nutrition procedures have to be approved by the State and USDA. He advised that his program is growing! For example, summer feeding is up 80%. He advised that \$100 million per year is spent on feeding programs, and that the Governor is a huge supporter. He also advised that we are the first state to have a children’s hospital receive free meals every day of the week. Dr. Lackey also stated that other states have called to inquire about feeding programs in the children’s hospitals.
- e. AECC Goals and Measurables Update: Paige Cox gave this update. Handout given: DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education – Arkansas Early Childhood Commission Strategic Plan. Paige stated this is a revolving document and the most robust to date. On April 10th the committee met to review this document. She asked for feedback. She advised that the TAPP Registry is referred to as the DCCECE Professional Development Registry and that the current system is going through a revision. She said other states are using this terminology and that it more clearly explains the purpose.
- i. The topic of screenings was discussed during this time. Dr. Haley Ho, Ratha Tracy, Tonya Williams, Dr. Chad Rodgers, Jody Veit-Edrington, Debbie Malone and Amy Denton all gave perspective on this topic. Points that were discussed are...
 1. Screenings in relation to Medicaid
 2. Screening should already be happening and issues around referral and follow-up
 3. Where does screening begin?
 4. Who should perform the screening – Doctor vs. School?
 5. States role in screening

6. The importance of not letting it get to a critical point before you start to screen.
 7. Jody Veit-Edrington discussed her experience and what her programs are doing regarding screening. She has observed that ABC and HS are getting screened, but voucher lack. She stated that it is very important for staff to be educated to notice delays.
 8. Ratha Tracy talked about licensing role in screening.
 9. Debbie Malone talked about training providers. She said at the National Child Care Aware meeting this was a topic of discussion. She said the National Child Care Aware is setting up a division to address this issue, and they are hoping to get both the Pediatric and Provider world together.
 10. Amy Denton discussed her program and mentioned medical staff needs to be a significant part of the process. She stated that how to make referral is an issue. She talked about her collaboration with Little Rock. She also discussed that it is important to place children properly.
 11. Ratha Tracy explained the Medical Care Plan. She added that physician's input is important.
 12. Dr. Chad Rodgers asked about FERPA (the educational side of HIPPA) Can a doctor talk to a principal or teacher? Tonya advised getting consent.
- f. Statewide Fatherhood Initiative: Jackie Dedman gave this update. Handout given – Arkansas Fatherhood and Family Initiative. Jackie advised this started as result of grantee meeting last year. She talked about where we are in terms of fatherhood. In HS/EHS single parent homes are prevalent, and there are limited fatherhood activities. Jackie Dedman contacted the National Office they provided TA and someone from the National Office attended the first state meeting. They also worked with the AR Leadership team to develop an action plan. Next step is to look at training plans for fathers. Jackie stated the National Fatherhood Office is using Arkansas as an example for other states. Ivory Daniels stated this is an incredible experience and good things are happening.
- g. Early Head Start/Head Start Update: Jackie Dedman gave this update. Jackie stated their institute was in March. She thanked everyone for their contribution. She discussed the 8 week read-a-thon. Over 4,000 books were read by or to EHS/HS Children. Top three readers are: CDI – Russellville, FACT Inc. and Ozark Opportunities. Little Buster was there to help with the recognition for the Read-A-Thon. In regards to the Grade

Level Reading Campaign (GLRC), they also sent letters to book stores to support the GLRC. Books-a-Million responded and will provide a book drive for all EHS/HS Children statewide.

- h. Jackie asked for a motion to approve the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator's Checklist. It provides a definition for School Readiness: Arkansas Definition of School Readiness. Tonya stated this committee's purpose was to address the indicator. She also asked the commission to think of what printed materials need to be printed. This document was up for approval. Jody Veit-Edrington made a motion to accept this document; Dr. Chad Rodgers seconded the motion. The motion carried, 4/15/14.

IV. New Business

- a. Introduction of Mary Kaye McKinney and Laura Webb: Tonya Williams discussed the re-organization in the Division. She talked about Micca's new position with Information Technology. She stated that there will be a data person in each Unit: ABC = James Munds, Licensing = ?, Family Support = new person starting Monday and Child Nutrition = Justin Foster will be helping. Tonya also advised there will be a Compliance position hired, the register has closed and interviews will start soon. The compliance position will be responsible for addressing issues with providers, identifying needed training and assist with billing issues. Tonya then introduced Mary Kaye McKinney (hired to fill the ABC Administrator position) and Laura Webb (hired to fill the CFO position). Both are new hires to DCCECE.
- b. Legislative Finance Update: Tonya Williams discussed that the fiscal session ended in March. Same budget as of last year, no significant changes. She said there was a request to add more money to the child nutrition program due to growth. Tonya then gave a shout-out to Senators Elliot and Chesterfield for trying to help increase funding for the ABC program. No additional funding was given, but Tonya wanted to acknowledge their efforts. Lastly, Tonya gave a CCDF update. She discussed the changes to the voucher co-pays and the upcoming changes to tiered reimbursement.
- c. Information from your AECC Chair:
 - i. School Readiness Summit: Committee increased from 8 to 9 members. They are moving forward with the summit. Tentative date is November 2014.
 - ii. Kellogg Foundation Grant: Sub grant. First, this grant has three components, look at Early Learning Frameworks. Second piece of grant is to hire parent coordinator and the third is taking a look at

the Kindergarten Entry Assessments. We are waiting to hear from the Kellogg Foundation.

- iii. Early Head Start Child Care Partnership: RFP will be out at any time, Jackie Dedman read quote regarding Infant/Toddlers. She discussed a recent meeting where barriers were discussed. FOA not out yet, but in April – still waiting. Jackie discussed the RFP process. Tonya talked about the grant writing process. Preference is to have interested parties write locally. Tonya discussed infant/toddler demographics. She advised that Geania Dickey is working with the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. An interested party to possibly write is UAPB. If state writes, the state would be considered as the “Lead Applicant.”

V. Summary/Announcements

- a. New DCCECE Logo – Jackie Dedman shared with AECC.
- b. Civil Rights Data Collection. Data about percentage of males being retained, which was 26% in Arkansas. Jackie Dedman just got this information this morning. Will review data and discuss at next meeting. Tonya Williams advised data is only schools.
- c. Pledge Cards – these are to be turned into the Winthrop Rockefeller campaign. These were passed out and to be signed before you go. The four topics addressed in the campaign: School Readiness, Chronic Absence, Summer Events and Community and Family Engagements.
- d. Crayola – Jody Veit-Edrington talked about the grant they received from Crayola. Crayola was excited about type of early childhood program they have. Will be featured in the National Principle Magazine.
- e. Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price: She advised Congress did extend funding, she is hoping for permanent funding. HIPPY is now supervised by Arkansas Home Visiting Network. She discussed the Healthy Child Summit. It is June 5th and 6th by invitation only. Lastly, she advised the Too Small to Fail is to held on May 3rd at the Clinton Center.
- f. Debbie Malone: She discussed that Child Care Aware took a delegate to Washington and bragged on state.

VI. Next Meeting

- a. Will be July 15, 2014

VII. Request for Adjournment

- a. The motion to adjourn came from Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price, Jody Veit-Edrington seconded the motion. The motion carried at 12:05pm on 4/15/14.