



NEW MEXICO EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL (ELAC)

Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2015

UNM Continuing Education-Room 123
1634 University Blvd. NE – Albuquerque NM

Meeting was called to order by Erica Stubbs, ELAC Chair. She welcomed the participants and thanked UNM CE for the use of the space.

Roll was called for the meeting. Present: Shannon Rivera (ZOOM), Heather Vaughn, Andy Gomm (ZOOM), Rebecca Dow (ZOOM), Franz Joachim, Dan Haggard, Ray Jaramillo, Barbara Tedrow, Leighann Lenti (ZOOM), Erica Stubbs and Janis Gonzales.

Excused: Beth Beers

Quorum established at 9:15 am by Erica Stubbs.

The community introduced themselves.

September Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve September 24, 2015 meeting minutes.
Franz Joachim made the motion. Janis Gonzales seconded. All were in favor. Motion was carried.

Public Comment was opened.

➤ Update: Race To the Top “Early Learning Challenge” (RTT) Alejandra Rebolledo Rea, CYFD

- Finishing third year of four year grant; requesting an extension for some projects.
 - Leadership and Executive Team are looking at different goals and projects to assess which ones can be extended.
 - Want to ensure there is a solid system for sustainability once RTT ends.
 - Current projects extended with no-cost extension - no new projects.
- Cross Sector approach is starting to align, but it has been a challenge because each systems is very unique.

- Working with UNM to help communities build and sustain resources and leadership when we are gone.
- In regards to Professional Development, still need to bring the workforce up to speed to the point where only maintenance is required.
- Integrating an aligned data system has taken longer than anticipated.
- The Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT) has been launched.
- Getting ready for year-end report—identifying accomplishments, challenges, and lessons learned.

No Cost Extension

- Extension is for one year. It would end in December 2017.
- Many projects were designed to end and that's why we're asking for an extension. We knew this money wasn't going to last. We've requested sustainability plans for projects to keep some level of the project going, but it won't be the same. Projects won't completely go away, but certain parts of them will.
- The preliminary plan is due to Feds in April. It will then be modified it throughout the year based on how things are going. We will submit it again before the end of the year, at least 90 days before the end of the grant.
- By law, the Feds can't speak about an extension until 90 days before the end. Discussions can officially begin 90 days before the end. We can't officially plan for the no-cost extension.
- The unofficial guidance we've received is, based on annual report, to prioritize projects that will definitely be incomplete by Dec 31, 2016. The biggest one is Data. If it were to end in 2016, the project would be incomplete. We will go for the max and begin negotiations. FOCUS is a priority because it is Cross Sector.
- Dan Haggard mentioned that we already had a quality rating system whereas other states did not have that and it took them 2-3 years to develop their systems. Systems change is huge. Feds are pleased with our progress.

Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT)

Brenda Kofahl, PED

- Currently analyzing data from approximately half of districts that participated in a field test during first 30 days of school year.
- Also doing focus groups with teachers to determine their feeling about the instrument; received positive feedback.
- Keep coming back to the fact that this is for their planning purposes and to understand where those children are when they come into Kindergarten, snapshot of each child when the walk into Kindergarten classroom.
- Something very encouraging we saw after the pilot was that teachers are talking about how important the Social Emotional indicators are.
- In January, we'll take data from field test, feedback from focus groups and meet with CYFD to look at rubrics and indicators because some of the rubrics that were used with the KOT were slightly different that those that we use in PreK.

- Goal is complete alignment; a continuum from those early 3s to where a child would be expected to be at when they enter 1st grade.
- Looking at what kind of support and training will Kindergarten teachers need during this process and as they look at these indicators.
 - Joe Manley is working to get feedback and to find out what teachers are saying and how to use it to direct Professional Development (PD).
 - Webinars, printed material much like the one page resources we have for PreK.
- Identified that we need to help teachers to understand that this is part of practice; not setting up testing situations, but observing children in normal activity. Also heard that some indicators represent something that they don't teach until later in the year; the training issue is that we're not measuring what you teach, we are measuring where kids are in this skill when they walk in your door.
- People have had to do a bit of adjusting in their curricular planning because now they know where their kids are so they've got to go back. Teachers are seeing correlation with the only required testing in Kindergarten which is DIBELS Next. They see the correspondence and it allows them to gather data on early literacy.
- PED has been able to look at what Kindergarten teachers need to prepare kids and to structure PD.
 - Offered LETRS training (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) for K-3 teachers and also LETRS Early Childhood.
- In discussion with Rob Corso for the Pyramid Model, looking how that model can be used for Kindergarten. Also considering webinars and one page resources that tie back to indicators; give teachers things that will be readily available on PED website. Trying to create a sustainable system of PD once RTT is gone.

FOCUS

Alejandra Rebolledo Rea, CYFD

- Cross Sector (all early childhood programs) is specifically related to FOCUS.
 - What are common threads that we can align?
 - Each has a uniqueness that we don't want to dilute. Aligning, but don't lose identity.
- Each sector is developing a logic model to remind us of what we want to accomplish and these logic models will feed into a New Mexico FOCUS Logic Model for all systems.
- From there we can look at all the trainings and systems we have in all the sectors and how they can be accessed.
- We have 260 programs active in cohorts. There is a difference between pilots and cohorts. FOCUS includes accreditation. There is not a mass of programs applying as they have been applying gradually. There is no wait list, no one is turned away. Before FOCUS, a program starts working with a TTAP then move into the FOCUS consultation piece. TTAP continues to support programs and freeing up consultants to focus on new programs. If programs get put on a waiting list, they won't lose funding.

➤ Silver City ELAC Town Hall Meeting report

Rebecca Dow, ELAC member

- 17 people present from various organizations. Heather gave overview of ELAC and roles/responsibilities. Opened for questions and comments. Biggest concerns were gaps in services mainly based on the region.
- In the past DDPRE services were happening in the home and at the WNMU site. That is no longer happening. After age of 3, children were not allowed to be served in the least restrictive natural setting so they had to go to the public schools. Request to superintendent to reinstate services in the home.
- Life Quest, third party provider for early intervention services is contracted with different departments to that the therapists had a full time job; good example of shared services.
- Silver City schools has let PreK contract lapse and does not intend to renew or participate. Maybe WNMU could step in to fill that gap.
- There was conversation about why 3 and 4 year olds cannot be combined in PreK setting.
- Where does Pre-K money go when it's being reverted?
- TTAPs holding voluntary trainings with little to no attendance.
 - They are not going to these voluntary trainings, when there are already so many mandatory ones.
 - Are we using TTAPs most effectively and it seems that might be another area of duplication?
- Children assigned unique number in PreK that is supposed to follow them to Kindergarten, but discussion about whether that number might not be being used once they go to Kindergarten.
 - District issue or statewide?
- WNMU is not a FOCUS site.
- Portfolio process is harder than taking a class so it's not an effective process. Is there a better way to do this?

TTAP Concerns

- Need clarification around roles and responsibilities around opening a new childcare center, i.e. TTAPs and Licensing.
- With reorganization, TTAPs have tightened their work plan, but are having to learn to work differently. They are in the throes of change in terms of the support system they have. It would be helpful to have a presentation from the TTAPs for an update on where they are in their reorganization as well as shared services. Shared services are a key component to rural areas.
- TTAPs are doing FOCUS trainings; childcare staff struggling to get 24 hours without TTAPs.
- Requested a flow chart. Helpful to see the pathways based on the services you need.
- Do TTAPs have the flexibility to train on CPR and First Aid or do they have prescribed a set of things they have to teach?
 - They are not qualified to teach First Aid and CPR and we don't want to take that responsibility. There are only certain people that are certified to provide that training. It's a lengthy process and a liability, so at this point we are not ready to offer that. It's a menu and there are only so many options. We have to be conscious about what we

can offer. Sometimes we can't offer everything, but we are looking at ways to have a variety of resources.

PreK Concerns

Alejandra Rebolledo Rea, CYFD

Brenda Kofahl, PED

- Distributed chart with data from PreK programs including PED and CYFD numbers.
- PreK has 4 different funding options with the allocated number of slots in PED:
 - 4 year olds at 450 hours – 4405
 - 4 year olds at 900 hours – 1022
 - 3 year olds at 450 hours – 0
 - 3 year olds at 900 hours – 0
 - Cumulative enrollment for PED PreK is 5144 and they only have 10 vacant slots.
 - Keep in mind that cumulative enrollment can be more than funded slots because we are replacing kids. If you serve a child for more than 30 days, they are counted.
- There was no funding for PED 3 year olds this year. Funding for the coming year depends on the legislature. CYFD received funding for 3 year olds in House Bill 2 and PED did not.
- State statute says that PreK is for 4 years olds. If the statute changes to say 3 and 4 year olds then we have more flexibility. Right now 3 year olds are a pilot.
- CYFD allocated slots are:
 - 4 year olds at 450 hours – 1162
 - 4 year olds at 900 hours – 2122
 - 3 year olds at 450 hours – 173
 - 3 year olds at 900 hours – 280
 - Still have 450 hour programs, but the majority are 900. Money goes to the extended days because they are also childcare programs.
 - Total funded is 3737. The cumulative enrollment is 3673 and right now we have 51 vacancies, most of which are in the 450 hour programs.
 - Having a harder time recruiting for the 450. Many programs are converting their 450 to 900 because they are seeing families want the full day.
- The expansion of funding is done at the legislative level. The collaboration continues regardless. Both departments sit down and look at the state and where there is need. For example, in the South Valley, we looked at how many applications were received, how many children were not being served, how many asked for PED and CYFD, etc.
- Suggested that PED makes the community collaboration piece part of their application as well.

Erica calls 5 minute break at 11:27 a.m.

➤ **ELAC Annual Report**

Erica Stubbs, ELAC Chair

- The report is officially dated October 1, 2015.
- It was sent to the Governor's office, the secretaries of CYFD, PED, and DOH, as well as LESC, LFC, and the Higher Education Taskforce.
- It was also presented at legislative functions; the Sandoval County Town Hall with Representatives Harper and Pacheco, and Senator Brandt. The discussion with legislators has been that this session is focused on approving a budget, but important points have been highlighted and that some of them don't necessarily require funding. Copy was also sent to be posted on website, for distribution through NMAEYC, and program managers.
- Requested that next year there are some live presentations of the report.

➤ **Professional Development Report – TEACH Scholarships**

Dan Ritchey, NMAEYC

- Reached 1000 TEACH scholars last year, predominately Hispanics and Native Americans in programs as they are the predominant workforce in NM. One of the main purposes of TEACH is to educate those educating our youngest children.
- This year, the number of credit hours completed went up to 7392, from 5226 in 2014.
- Most people in TEACH are working on their AA degree. That's where we're at as a workforce.
- Retention of TEACH scholars has increased this year; this year the turnover rate is 10%, whereas the statewide turnover rate is 31%
 - Seeing that this becomes their career.
- Incentives participants' turnover at 9%, with 216 participants.
 - We hear a lot that Incentives really eases their financial stress.
- There are waiting lists for TEACH and Incentives.
 - More grant money will be available from PED so the people who are public school educators will be receiving that in the spring.
- Had to limit number of classes in spring because of demand.
- Went to CYFD for more funds. Department wants to know plan for prioritizing that money.
 - Need a system in place once RTT runs out that prioritizes students—for example, is the Associate level more important the Graduate?
- Currently, about third of TEACH scholarships are funded by RTT.
- NMAEYC may ask legislature for money from General Fund as RTT money runs out.
- CYFD and PED can be proud of the support they provide for educators.
- Spanish courses for Early Childhood are now being offered by CNM and Doña Ana which is really big.

➤ **Announcements**

- Advisory council members need to submit their financial forms that are required for if they were appointed by the Governor. They should scan and send them to Alejandra, no photographs.
- Ray will be running for representative for district 35.
- Suggested that the ELAC Annual Report be posted on the Early Learning NM website.

- What is the status of the CYFD Head Start Collaboration representative for ELAC?
 - There have not been many applications, hoping to fill vacancy soon.

➤ **Public Comment**

Jim Copeland, Executive Director of Altamira Specialized Family Services, Bernalillo and Torrance counties

- Requests that ELAC look at any recommendations that comes regarding the FIT program and the provision of those services. There's currently a recommendation under consideration that the staff that provides early intervention systems have an early childhood development class. Most of the people working in early intervention don't have that class so they'll be required to go back and take that class. The problem is that Altamira has to pay them to go take that class and while they're taking that class they are not producing billable hours to support the early intervention system so then Altamira will be losing more money. The teacher of the course uses Altamira as a practicum site for the people taking those classes. Encourages that we put common sense into what we're doing. The rates that were established for Early Intervention System by DOH in 2003 are out of date and we are losing money providing FIT services. Asking for more requirements for a system that's already losing money doesn't make sense.
 - The Interagency Coordinating Council is going to ask legislature for \$ 5 million to provide increased rates for the Early Intervention System.
 - Another concern is that there is a disconnect between eligibility for FIT and eligibility for Part C services. We transitioned a lot of kids out of FIT that aren't eligible for Part B because they don't meet the difference in developmental delay. We lose those children, not because they aren't developmentally delayed but because they don't meet the eligibility criteria for Part B.

Ana Otero-Hatanaka, Association of Developmental Disabilities Community Providers

- FIT program has never been fully funded. Presented to the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee and they have endorsed \$5 million request to help fund the 2003 rate study. Although FIT has never been fully funded, it's important to note that the rate study doesn't reflect all the increase in costs from 2003 to 2015. \$5 million may not even be adequate to meet the needs of the providers out there. Requests that ELAC support the \$5 million bill to further fund the rate study for FIT.
 - ELAC can't lobby on behalf of anything. They can only present pros, cons, unforeseen consequences, and to help educate legislatures. ELAC cannot advocate for legislation.
 - Is it appropriate for us to present an analysis of what the financial need is across the early childhood sector, perhaps for next legislative session?

Nancy Lewis, UNMCDD

- Regarding the KOT, are the data and results diagnostic/prescriptive at all? Do Kindergarten teachers take that in order to make referrals?
 - Clarified that the KOT is not diagnostic/prescriptive and that it provides preliminary information about a child's interests.
 - Results need to be valid and reliable to be a diagnostic tool. KOT is an observation tool.

- 10 years ago the goal was that no child would arrive in Kindergarten with an unidentified disability. Does the KOT data identify kids with disabilities even though it's not used that way?
 - Partnering with the DOH so that we know wherever a child goes, they will get screened. Depending on where the child comes from we are trying to catch them earlier.
 - The screening that the public school does, that they have always done, as part of the developmental process is when something will be identified. The role of the school district has not changed. The KOT is not designed for that. There are milestones in the ELGs, but they are not designed for that.
- As part of the Association of Maternal and Child Health Program, we've been working on the Act Early State Systems Grant. One of our projects has been doing early childhood development webinars. They've been very popular and they are archived on the UNM CDD website. If you attended them live it would generate a certificate for you, as well as if you attended an archived one. They've been very popular, with anywhere from 50-130 participants. If you'd like more information, you can email me at nancylewis@salud.unm.edu.

➤ **Upcoming Meeting-**

- March 24, 2016 – UNM Continuing Education, Room 123

Motion to adjourn public portion of meeting.

Barbara Tedrow made the motion. Heather Vaughn seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourns at 12:57 p.m.