

**NEW MEXICO EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
(ELAC)  
Meeting Minutes  
May 21, 2013  
United Way of Central New Mexico – Albuquerque NM

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by Mr. Larry Langley, ELAC Chair at 9:05 AM. He thanked United Way of Central New Mexico for allowing us to use their facilities. Mr. Langley also mentioned that the sign in sheet for community input would be available until 11:00 AM. (Public Comment Opens)

**Determining Quorum**

Roll Call: Members Present: Larry Langley, Erica Stubbs, Andy Gomm, Ruth Kie, Karen Ziegler, Leighann Lenti, Elaine Gard.

Excused – Barbara Tedrow, Rebecca Dow, Dan Haggard

**Approval of Meeting Minutes for January 8, 2013.**

Motion to approve meeting minutes for January 8, 2013 as presented: Karen Ziegler/Leighann Lenti. All in Favor, Motion carried

Andy Gomm, DOH FIT Program Manager, put a plea out for interest in the three Council vacancies. Alejandra Rebolledo explained that, according to New Mexico to the Early Childhood Care and Education Act and the ELAC By-Laws, the vacant positions are: One representative of a Local Educational Agency, One representative of the state agency responsible for children's health or mental health care issues and once public member with knowledge and experience in early childhood care and education. To apply, the interested individuals may go to the Governor's website under "Apply for Boards and Commissions": Early Learning Advisory Council, upload resume with an alert Alejandra that you have applied so that she can follow up.

**Update: Race to The Top "Early Learning Challenge" (RTT)  
New Mexico RTT Leadership Team**

Scopes of work had to be submitted – very detailed goals and explanation of implementation with specific timelines. She articulated for the Council the five main goals for RTT:

- Project Management – To manage Race to The Top and coordinate between the different agencies, hire the project manager, monitor contracts and sub-contracts, compliance with the time lines and reporting. The project is managed at large by the New Mexico Race to The Top Leadership Team: Leighann Lenti, Andy Gomm, Dan Haggard, Alejandra Rebolledo, and once hired, the Project Coordinator.

- Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (FOCUS TQRIS) – To be implemented across all the New Mexico Early Childhood Systems. Currently, the state is piloting FOCUS with 45 licensed early child hood programs, 4 Head Start Programs and six CYFD Pre-K programs. This project will be implemented with CYFD Home Visiting, NM FIT-Part C programs and PED Pre-K as well.
- Professional Development – To work with Higher Ed Task Force to improve the work force development and provide scholarships though New Mexico TEACH<sup>®</sup> program.
- Early childhood investment zones – To expand to 10 communities within next 5 years where there is no services, high need, no infrastructure.
- Early Childhood data – To create a unique identification for children participating in early childhood programs, warehouse or depository for data make sure we are protecting the privacy of our blueprint customers.
- Kindergarten entry assessment – To validate the assessment process taking place in New Mexico for Kindergarten Entry.

Alejandra added that there is additional funding directed to the Quality Project and related specifically to the initial application submitted back on 2011. There will be meetings to discuss how the 12.5 million can be used to enhance programs quality and review what was noted in the application and what the process would be to submit a request. She continued with the RTT update saying that the ELAC is a key part of RRT and how ELAC can help with some of the community meetings so that there is an opportunity for feedback.

Council member Andy Gomm, expressed his concern about how little has been put in place for public input process. He said it is important to make a link between the ELAC as the public oversight of the early childhood system in New Mexico If there are items that can be identified that are part of the ELAC plan that could be a part of the additional money, for instance the recommendation for the formation of early childhood Councils. If this is still important, the ELAC might want to convey this to the folks that are writing for the additional funding (\$12.5).

Langley provided some history on how Race to the Top started. He stated it was the current federal administration driving how they wanted educational reform to look. It was top down driven rather than grass roots with no public input. The flexibility with early childhood challenge is a lot greater because the states are more involved in what is happening in early childhood than the Feds are.

Langley stated that the Council can work to enhance different parts of the project already in place. The Council can keep track and respond to the grant requirements and ensure that they are still consistent with the goals of the Council keeping the precepts of the grant.

Alejandra recommended that all recommendations and comments be taken to the committees and that the committees be asked to make the recommendations and bring them back to the leadership team.

Gomm asked if the committees can vote and take to the Leadership Team or if the recommendations need to come through the ELAC. Mr. Langley responded that the committees can do the heavy lifting, getting input and recommendations and convey their recommendations and reports to the entire Council. This allows the Council to act in a way that meets the requirements if there is a need to make changes.

### **ELAC Mission and Vision, Structure Overview**

#### **Alejandra Rebolledo-Rea, Bureau Chief Office of Child Development**

Alejandra explained the New Mexico ELAC structure. She noted that the Council has developed a formalized structure for the ELAC as there will be more people who will be involved at the state level with input from the different committees. When something is brought to the ELAC, the item be discussed and voted on, recommendations will be taken to the departments, and then taken to the legislation and governor depending on what the recommendations are as per the New Mexico to the Early Childhood Care and Education Act and the ELAC By-Laws. There will be a concentration on building partnerships, making sure that the systems are being integrated and that strategic, research based, data driven recommendations are provided to the policy makers. The New Mexico ELAC Vision Statement states that the Council wants to be the collective voice to move forward the early learning system.

Alejandra also gave an overview of the committee structure saying that each committee member will be meeting with community partners and the information from committees will be forwarded to the ELAC at Large. The structure will allow the ELAC to organize information while looking at priorities of the state. The ELAC will be traveling around the state and hear what is going on in communities. Each of the four committees will have a committee chair. Each chair was introduced and gave an overview of each committee.

#### **Public Policy Committee, Larry Langley, Public Policy Committee Chair**

##### **Function, duties and membership**

**Public Policy Committee** - Larry Langley and Barbara Tedrow will co-chair. Langley explained that this will not be a committee that supports or opposes legislation. For any legislation that affects early childhood education that relates to birth to five, the committee will be doing research and analysis and will make recommendations as to how it will affect directly or indirectly the overall system of education in the state. The committee will work with the Legislative Finance Council (LFC) and LESC to draft and move policy forward.

#### **Finance Committee, Erica Stubbs, Finance Committee Chair**

##### **Function, duties and membership**

Erica Stubbs, ELAC Executive Committee member, said this committee will be looking at ways to support the field of early childhood; looking at the different programs, services, areas. Financially, the committee will be focusing on the best for all children using a proactive and not

reactive structure. The committee will be getting information from a wide variety of resource networks working with different entities and different systems, hearing from all processes to make sure that they have as much information as possible.

Mimi Aledo, Legislative Finance Committee, made the suggestion that it would be really helpful in growing an early childhood budget, if the ELAC could put out a recommendation to the department before they have to submit their budget requests to the LFC. It is easier for the analyst to recommend something that the department is requesting prior to the September 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

### **Workforce Development Committee, Elaine Gard, Workforce Development Committee Chair Function, duties and membership**

The committee for is recommending one Task Force and one Subcommittee. The function of the Committee is to address a high priority outcome from the ELAC strategic plan which is to ensure that New Mexico has a high quality early childhood workforce that can sustain high quality early childhood learning programming. One of the duties of the committee is to serve a source of data and support the data centralization to ensure that the ELAC has the knowledge that is needed to support implementation. The committee will have to identify what the quality requirements are and what represents a high quality early childhood workforce. The committee will need to look at the whole Early Childhood System and determine what the quality markers are for a high quality early childhood workforce and find the common denominators. The task force and subcommittee are already defining what it means to be high quality in early childhood through the Higher Ed task force. The TEACH entity determines where scholarships get provided in the workforce so they can attain that higher level of quality.

### **Workforce Development Proposed Sub-Committees**

#### **Higher Education Task Force**

#### **Betsy Cahill, Higher Education Task Force Representative**

Dr. Cahill stated that the main goal of the committee is to bring about workforce development as higher education, academics and researchers, preparing teachers to work with young children. She gave a brief history as to what has already been done including starting the early childhood teachers license, birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; implementation of programs and town hall meetings. It became a standing committee in 1994 with the primary roll to continue developing a comprehensive state-wide professional development system, trying to be responsive to stake holders in the community. She explained entry levels for teachers (knowledge, certificate, Associates degree) and the connection to the competencies at the final goal: BA. The competencies were re-written. The Higher Ed Task Force has put into place opportunities for the workforce to make choice as to where they would like to take their career path. For this reason, two other pathways were developed and are still in process: Early Childhood Program Administration degree and the Family Infant Toddler Studies (FIT Studies) at a BA level.

Langley will be presenting to LFC and LEFC in July or August on what ELAC is doing. He asked if committee chairs and Betsy Cahill or someone else from Higher Ed would be available to present. Mimi Aledo noted that the LFC agenda is already being worked on and someone may want to get in touch with Director Abbey.

Langley asked what was the biggest struggle is in seeing this implemented. The response was that one of the biggest challenges is that people cannot be found that have PH.D.'s in early childhood and that students have a hard time passing the basic skills test for English and writing for teacher licensure program.

Gomm stated that the importance of professional development cannot be underestimated. He asked about the capacity to build a work force to meet the demand and how does the Higher Task Force plan to react to the changing field of early childhood not just in classroom settings. Cahill responded that by development of the FIT Studies and more faculty to offer those courses, the Higher Ed Task Force is hoping to address this need.

Eric Stubbs asked about how Higher Ed is connected to community colleges and to high schools. Cahill answered that they have two co-chairs at the community colleges, one from a four year institution, one from a two year institution and have courses that are aligned with Higher Ed early childhood courses.

Judy Fifield, CYFD stated that the 45 hour entry level course which is required to work in a licensed day care facility is based on 7 core competency areas that are used in the common core book. All the GRADS programs in High School use the 45 hour course manual as their course syllabus. She said it lays the foundation for students to have an understanding about the 7 core competency areas as they go on to get their NM Child Development certificate, AA degree and BA degree. She added that it is important to understand about the career lattice it all builds on each other.

### **Early Childhood Scholarships Committee**

#### **Dan Ritchey, Project Director T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEW MEXICO**

Project Director, Dan Ritchey gave an overview of the TEACH Scholarship program to the Council. He noted that the Teach Scholarships would observe their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. The scholarships began in 2004. He said from the beginning it has been a grant from CYFD and grants from PED and private money. TEACH scholarship provides a bonus (\$400 per year) and a financial bonus plus there is no waiting list for scholarships. The scholarships support people to obtain their degrees and there are ad-hoc committee looking at scholarships for Family, Infant Toddler studies for early intervention and home visitors. The committee is working with Andy Gomm, Alejandra Rebolledo and others on how to get students into FIT classes, and assist them with scholarships. They are looking at developing a certificate for the five FIT classes. TEACH has been working with a large range of programs from the beginning.

Points that Ritchey made to the Council were that he hoped that TEACH can reach some parts of the state in a bigger way than they have. He said they want to help in the investment zones area and help make new FOCUS system a success. He said in order to keep these people in the workforce, they need to provide more adequate compensation, start incentives and include public school pre-k teachers. In all cases it is supplemental compensation, twice a year. He noted that there is a Teach advisory committee with sixteen members with the incentive of first come first serve policy. He also noted to the Dona Ana Community College is offering early childhood education classes in Spanish. CNM started offering classes in Spanish with two new cohorts starting at CNM this fall.

There was a request from ELAC Chair Langley if Ritchey would be available to give a composite to present in front of the legislature. Ritchey agreed that he could do the presentation.

### **Access to Quality Early Childhood Programs**

#### **Function, duties and membership**

#### **Karen Ziegler, Professional Development Committee Chair**

Karen explained that the Committee is charged with ensuring access to quality of services for all children in all communities. This includes access in unserved and under-served communities with high needs. The purpose is to ensure that all children are ready for school and life through participation in high quality early childhood programs.

### **Access to Quality Early Childhood Programs Proposed Committees**

#### **Social/Emotional – Infant / Early Childhood Mental Health Committee**

#### **Katrina Montano-White, New Mexico NM Pyramid Partnership Coordinator**

Katrina Montano-White, CYFD presented to the Council the New Mexico Pyramid Partnership, as the framework for supporting social and emotional well being for infants and young children. The Pyramid Partnership represents a multi-disciplinary team. The committee has the opportunity to work with Dr. Rob Corso, University of Vanderbilt, who is facilitating the process. The concept and framework is based on evidence based practices for promoting young children's social emotional competence or challenging behaviors.

The committee is developing the mission and vision for the Pyramid Partnership that will guide the group's work to ensure that early childhood practitioners in partnership with families can support young children's social emotional wellbeing.

#### **New Mexico Special Quest Committee**

#### **Karen Ziegler, Head Start Collaboration Office**

Karen Ziegler, CYFD spoke to the Council Special Quest, a committee that has been in the state of New Mexico for 13 years. Special Quest is about inclusion of all children in early childhood programs. It will be a way for the Special Quest group to get recommendations to the ELAC and

for ELAC to make recommendations to Special Quest for system wide implementation of inclusive practices in early childhood programs.

### **Discussion and Action on Proposed ELAC Committees**

Motion to approve Proposed ELC Committees with current Sub-Committees and Taskforces as presented: Elaine Gard/Karen Ziegler. All in favor, Motion Carried

### **Public Comment**

Anna Otero, Director of the Association of Developmental Disabilities, thanked the Council for having the meeting as an open meeting and said she was impressed with all committees and sub-committees works. She asked that the Council not to forget about the Family Infant Toddler Program (FIT). She added her hopes for FIT to stay in the Council's minds because young children with disabilities are always left out of the picture.

Betsy Cahill, said she had previously mentioned her idea on having a superintendent for early childhood in each community.

Robin Wells – Wanted to remind the Council that it is important to remember young children and felt that it had already been discussed with the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) approach, access to quality programs. All is best practice, evidence based. It should be embedded in our work in how we teach higher education students to support young children in early childhood programs. Instead of having the workforce look at children as having misbehaviors, they need to look at them as supporting positive behaviors. She also commented on Brenda Kofahl and Ann Zuni, personnel from PED who attend Higher Ed Task Force meetings, are strong supporters of including children with disabilities into Pre-k programs.

Gloria Bonner, NM DOH – Invited the Council to come to the Early Childhood Action Network on May 31<sup>st</sup> with the theme, The Road To Reading, Turning the Curb on Early Literacy, Pregnancy to Age Four. If attending, you need to register on-line at [earlychildhood.nm.com](http://earlychildhood.nm.com). They will also spend time sharing children's literature.

Karen Lucero – Co-Chair of the Inter-Agency Coordinating Council with the FIT Program said what she takes from the meeting is that there are efforts at collaboration. What she would like to see is more connected collaboration between the early childhood education centers, child development, home programs and FIT and consider the economic impact also.

### **Meeting Adjourn:**

Motion to Adjourn meeting: Elaine Gard/Erica Stubbs. All in favor, meeting adjourned.