

**NEW MEXICO EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL
(ELAC)**

July 16, 2012
United Way – Albuquerque NM
MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Larry Langley, ELAC Chair at 9:11 AM. Mr. Langley thanked Ed Rivera and United Way staff for the use of the space for the meeting. Mr. Langley reminded all about signing up for the community input section of the meeting.

Determining Quorum

Roll Call: Alejandra Rebolledo.

Members Present: Larry Langley, Andy Gomm, Rebecca Dow, Ruth Kie, Karen Ziegler, Barbara Tedrow, Polly Anderson, Dan Haggard, Leighann Lenti, Elaine Gard.

Members Absent (excused): Erica Stubbs, Jane Peacock*, Lillian Montoya-Rael.

* Jane Peacock has resigned from her position for personal reasons.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for May 21, 2012

Members had received the meeting minutes ahead of time, no changes.

Motion to approve meeting minutes for May 21, 2012: Elaine Gard/Polly Anderson. All in favor, motion carried.

Senate Bill 120 and Race To The Top “Early Learning Challenge”

1. Race To The Top Update:

Dan Haggard, Deputy Director, ECS, CYFD and Leighann Lenti, Senior Policy Advisor, PED gave an update on Race To The Top.

Ms. Lenti advised that the US Department of Education and US Department of Health & Human Services announced that they will do a Phase 2 of RRTTP, Early Learning Challenge competition specifically for the states who received approximately 75% or more of the points available in Phase 1. This includes New Mexico and four other states.

Ms. Lenti reported that a notice of proposed requirements was released on June 14th by New Mexico Department of Education for a 30 day review and comment period and closes on July 20th. Final requirements will be put out by September 1st. New Mexico and other five states will need to resubmit information. The expectation is that funding will be awarded by end of the calendar year. In addition to New Mexico, other states that can resubmit are: Colorado, Illinois, Oregon and Wisconsin.

Ms. Lenti informed the group not to expect any significant changes with the contents of the proposal. She noted that the Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and CYFD met and brainstormed on where to target their efforts.

Included in the power point presentation were points on organizational structure; how funds will flow among agencies, which will function as lead agency and who the fiscal agent will be.

Ms. Lenti went over clarifications on specific sections.

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Mr. Dan Haggard spoke on the original intent of the Early Learning Challenge and noted that the purpose was to promote school readiness which continues on in the round two process when all the different phases will be implemented.

He explained that if all five states apply, everyone will get the funding that they have been allocated. He stated that nothing can be added or deleted to Section B which is the FOCUS TQRIS process and the heart of it all. In the other sections he explained that we can do as much as we have money for.

There were some questions for Mr. Haggard and Ms. Lenti: It seems like ELAC had to sign off on the application last time. Is this the part of the process this time? Response: Previously the Governor and Attorney General had to sign off on the application. There had to be an MOU signed by all participating agencies and signed by the ELAC. The NPRs indicated that the Governor will have to sign off again and the MOU will need to be in place. The NPR does not address the ELAC. We are waiting for the final requirements that are due by September 1st.

Mr. Langley asked if Ms. Lenti could send a notice to all members of ELAC and ask for a vote on sending a letter of support for the RTTT proposal.

What does the funding look like in subsequent years? Response: The budget will be stretched out to 5 years.

Comment: We have to be aware that with \$25 million coming to the state will have a lot of focus on it. We may want to do some informing of specific groups – Tribal Communities as well as our federal programs to let them know that we want them in the process of data sharing and looking at quality. Response: Agreed. After final requirements come out it has been agreed to bring together some of the Native American programs and some federal programs to inform them of what is included in the application and why it is in the best interest of kids.

Mr. Haggard added that in terms of the unique identifier we will be partnering with PED and assigning unique identifiers when children enter the program which will enable programs to view what other programs the children might have been involved in. He stated that we will begin having approximately 20 community meetings starting in Santa Fe, July 17th. The meetings will involve talking to people about the FOCUS process and how we are going to be transitioning and sharing information.

Clarify how investment zones related to RTTT? Response: There is a section of the application that talks about ensuring that most at risk children are included. As stated in SB 120 – we believe in universal services. With limited funds, we need to begin in communities with children most at high risk.

2. Early Childhood Data Part 1: Data System and Unique Identifier - (Handouts)

Katherine Freeman, NM Early Childhood Development Partnership and Dr. Peter Winograd, Director of the Center for Education Policy, UNM.

Dr. Winograd spoke on communication across agencies – the challenge (a capacity issue). He noted that one of the ELAC's duties is development and management of effective data collection systems to support the necessary functions including the tracking of kids through the education system: prenatal to early childhood, kindergarten, higher education.

Key policy questions: Can New Mexico answer critical questions about its' young children? How are our children and families doing each step along the way through public school, through higher education, through careers, through families, through communities and back? How do we make it better?

Dr. Winograd pointed out that having a unique identifier is crucial; putting it on high school transcripts; tracking into K-12; college and/careers. Every agency needs its own data system. The most immediate thing is to strengthen New Mexico's capacity to use data to gain insights, to advocate for change, address key policy questions, prioritize resources and hold adults accountable. Two immediate tasks: push for full implementation of the early childhood data system, the unique identifier, and the linkage to the P20 data system. It was recommended that ELAC ask for reports – push for a unique identifier, get the RTTT money and build these systems.

Ms. Freeman noted that we can use data with to benefit children and families. She said the Partnership stands ready with their resources to provide information.

There were questions for Dr. Winograd and Ms. Freeman: how can we involve the federal programs? Response: We've had to put our processes together in order to share data so and set up a strong structure outline.

Mr. Haggard recommended that ELAC look at the LFC reporting and methodology and look at reasons behind the data. He stated that there is a need to look at all the factors; it is important to enter not as high stakes; and that there is a need to remain focused on the children and get what they need in order to be successful.

Dr. Winograd stated that a lot of the challenge with implementation will be people's legitimate concerns on how the data is going to be used.

3. Early Childhood Data Part II: Mapping our State's Needs: The NM Early Childhood Investment Zones

Tom Scharmen, M.P.H. Epidemiologist, DOH - PowerPoint Presentation: (Website)
Mr. Dan Haggard, Deputy Director ECS, CYFD

Mr. Haggard stated that building trust across agencies in order to have a more complete aggregate data warehouse.

A power point presentation was given by Mr. Scharmen: NM Early Childhood Data Warehouse – Community Assessment for Participatory Planning. Handouts were given to the group.

Some key points made: pilot websites are up and running; structure is made up of analysts from different agencies supplying data and time for planning; ELAC is one of the main supporters; DOH is a key partner designated to be a central collecting point of data. New Mexico Community Data Collaborative: A collaborative health equity assessment initiative with the goal of providing communities and decision makers in our city, county and state with evidence to build health into public and private policies and practices.

Mr. Haggard expanded on Mr. Scharmen's presentation regarding Early Childhood investment zones making the following points: the importance of the early learning challenge fund proposal and that at this time the data isn't perfect or complete.

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He noted that one of our strengths is Epidemiologists such as Mr. Scharmen who can show us where there are inequities in the social service system.

He stated that we are very fortunate to be able to partner with the Public Health Division and DOH. He said it is important to look at socio-economic factors. He explained the county matrix and data in a more detailed way to the group: aggregated indicators by county and then ranked. He pointed out that often there are communities that are not paid much attention to (rural, small numbers of children, families, etc.). The communities that are small for example did not apply for Pre-K funds. We must ask ourselves if there are alternative early childhood educational services in communities where there are few children and where the funding formula doesn't generate enough money to provide those types of services. We have to have a baseline. Some communities are having a really hard time. This is sometimes a difference between life and death.

Chair Langley turned the meeting over to Vice-Chair Barbara Tedrow as he had to leave for personal reasons.

4. FOCUS/TQRIS

Dan Haggard, Deputy Director, Early Childhood Services, CYFD

Mr. Haggard gave a short history on TQRIS noting that New Mexico was one of the first states to develop a quality rating system with 3 levels (Gold, Silver, Bronze). There was legislative concern: low income children were not attending gold rated programs. It was important to make quality improvements so that low income children on subsidy had greater access to high quality childcare. Programs that served low income families couldn't afford to voluntarily make the improvements to quality.

Mr. Haggard spoke about Aim High and the fact that it was successful in all three areas. He indicated the following lessons learned from Aim High: it is difficult for programs to maintain their quality after graduating from Aim High; very difficult to have 5 star recognition on multiple, independent, external accredited entities; programs seemed to be focused more on the score or criteria rather than why they were doing something. Through a lot of research, we know now the types of criteria that make a difference in terms of child outcomes. Focusing on relationships is critical for outcomes.

A Task Force was convened in 2010 with the following recommendations:

- All programs should have access to Aim High
- Training provided on Environmental rating scales
- Tracking of inconsistencies between the accreditation bodies.
- Process of developing Early Learning guidelines

(Focus at a Glance Handout)

FOCUS – Pilot Phase starting January 1, 2013- handout/PowerPoint

The application process for programs that would like to participate in year 1, year 2, year 3 pilot was explained as to how Focus would affect each program. Accrediting entities that will be recognized by the state for STAR Level 5 are COA – out of school time care, FCCA – family child care and NAEYC and other accreditation entities that have equivalent standards to NAEYC have requested state approval.

Other main points made were restructuring of the TTAP system from eight to four programs. A national research firm will help to validate the instrument/criteria for FOCUS. RTTT will impact will and expand this process. TTAPs will continue with their responsibility for maintaining Aim High program levels and will provide training on best practices. A requirement of RTTT is to apply Focus Tier Quality Improvement Rating System across all systems. A lot of focus on early learning guidelines, on authentic assessment, observation planning, curriculum development. Accreditation – entities that are approved for accreditation will still be approved for star level 5. A revision on the process will be done based on input from the programs and the research entity. Will enter into year 3 of the pilot phase; and then a full evaluation and validation. When finished, New Mexico will have a self assessment product and a validated system for rating programs at all of the levels.

The New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children (NMAEYC) - handout
Ms. Baji Rankin and Dan Ritchey, Director of Teach Early Childhood Scholarship Program

Ms. Rankin spoke on the mission and history of The New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children which is to promote quality care and education for the well being of all young children birth to age eight through professional development and advocacy. By tailoring their diversity to the culture of New Mexico, they make sure that all national and state initiatives and efforts are suited for New Mexico working closely with CYFD. Ms. Rankin announced that *The Wonder of Learning Exhibit*. (handout) will be coming to NM from Reggio Emilia, Italy, July –Dec 2014 (exhibit).

Mr. Ritchey spoke on T.E.A.C.H scholarships and incentives, there are early education classes in Spanish at CNM and Dona Ana County. The T.E.A.C.H Scholarship program has received additional funding from the State Legislation through CYFD and PED who are strong for supporters of T.E.A.C.H.

Early Childhood Mental Health in New Mexico (power point presentation)
Alejandra Rebolledo, Bureau Chief, Office of Child Development/CYFD

Alejandra explained why the early years of life are the foundation for healthy development and great growth for a child's social, emotional and cognitive development. Some of the main points of her presentation were on how relationships play a major role in this development and how early experiences whether positive or negative have a long term effect on a child.

She noted that Harvard University Research included brain development, experiences, wiring, processes, genes, interactions between child and a significant adult. She explained the different types of stress and the effect it has upon the brain: chronic stress; positive stress; tolerable stress; and toxic stress.

She spoke on the short term effect and how studies show that the more risk factors a child has, the higher the risk for developmental delays. This is the reason for collaboration between Infant Mental Health, Child Protective Services and the FIT Program.

Alejandra added that the Center for Disease Control Study focused on Adverse Childhood Experiences and the long term effects for individuals. She explained that early negative experiences such as lack of support from the adult, can generate a more challenging behavior between ages 3-4; if aggressive at an early age with no intervention, the child will continue the pattern and some of those children end up in juvenile detention: the older the child the more difficult the intervention process. There are not a lot of early childhood services for children with challenging behaviors birth to age five.

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Ms. Rebolledo asked the questions: What does it mean for New Mexico? What can we do? The national rate for substantiated child abuse in the nation is ten for every 1,000 children; New Mexico is at 11.8 for every 1,000 children. 86.5 % of these children are neglected. We need to develop a systematic approach to support the social emotional development of young children; initiate positive interventions early on. She explained that the Pyramid Model is used for supporting the social emotional competence of infants and young children. An effective workforce needs to be prepared to work with young children; and use targeted intervention as a method of prevention.

There are national and state resources: CYFD Infant Mental Health Council, Infant Mental Health teams who work with targeted populations, workforce development training and the partnership with the Infant Mental Health Association and the National Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL).

She noted that in order to have happy, healthy successful children, we need to teach for prevention and develop a system for intervention and involvement with parents.

Public Comment:

Vice- Chair, Barbara Tedrow opened the floor for public input reminding participants that each has 3 minutes to allow others to participate and that their comments would be part of public record.

Participants:

Ms. Molly Grady spoke on the Decade of the Child, a state-wide advocacy group with the goal that by 2020, children and their families will be at the center of all policy decisions. This organization works with collective community impact. The McCune grant in Rio Rancho and Portales is helping to develop community early childhood support networks.

Announcements:

Ms. Alejandra Robolledo announced that the ELAC Bylaws and other documents will be posted in www.newmexicokids.org.

There was a request to create a list serve for members, CYFD staff will look into the process of creating one.

Andy Gomm asked members to reflect a moment for Mr. Langley and his family, thanking him for his dedication to the ELAC and to the children in New Mexico.

Next Meeting Reminder – September 17, 2012 to be held at United Way – Albuquerque NM.

Adjourn Meeting

Ms. Tedrow entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion to adjourn meeting: Karen Zeigler/ Polly Anderson. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:45 PM.