

The Permanent Legislative Commission on Child Care in Rhode Island
Meeting Minutes November 14, 2011

Attendees:

Representative Grace Diaz, Chair
Blythe Berger
Rachel Flum
Karen Beese
Kate Begin
Kathie Sandberg
Larry Pucciarelli
Laura Mason Zeisler
Elizabeth Burke Bryant
Pam Hall
Susan Libutti
Tracy Cheney
Sharon Friedman
Katy Heneghan
Angela Bannerman Ankoma
Lisa Hilderbrand
Ray Choirnere, House Policy
Leslie Gell

Minutes:

Representative Messier asked if there were any reports from agencies.

Blythe Berger: stated that they were having the child health consultant networking meeting on December 15th at the Warwick Public Library. The topic is asthma control. It's not limited to nurses, if you'd like to attend you can contact Mary Ann. Chair Diaz asked Blythe from the Department of Health what stage the pilot program is in? Chair Diaz asked how many child care centers are they addressing? Blythe stated that Bradley was awarded the overall coordination for the state. The Department of Health made recommendations last year at the licensing, if they wanted to certify other child care health consultants, that's still in that department as to what they want to do about that. Blythe stated that they have one health consultant at

the State who's been to the training institute and they have two at Bradley and between 20-25 nurses regularly come to these meetings. Right now there is one nurse, they would need to take on more centers paying fees, and she believes there are 3, before they would be able to hire another nurse at Bradley. The determination in terms of licensing saying yes or no to another type of child care health consultant has not been made.

Lisa Hildebrand: Brightstars is holding steady at 112 programs, and 3 pending, hopefully 115 by next week. Starry Starry Night is December 7, 2011; invitations should be going out tomorrow. The Early Childhood Conference since the last meeting and they had a great attendance, 80 people on Friday and over 400 on Saturday.

Karen Beese: CCDF State Plan has been officially approved by ACF. There will be a PDF version hopefully by the end of November, so it should be on the web-site by the beginning of December. Still doing work through the Ford Foundation Work Support Strategies Grant as part of that last week they had someone from CLASP and the Urban Institute come in to facilitate internal retreat with the Providence field office discussing ways to streamline the application process for child care assistance for families as well as for workers inside. There were lots of ideas that they are going to go back and process and send a written version. She stated that this was the first time they have come down and were looking at child care alone. They presented some preliminary results of the market rate survey at the Community Exchange a few weeks back and are hoping to have the final version within the next month and that will be on the website as well. Kate Begin asked Karen about the CCDF State Plan. She asked if there was anything significantly different in the plan that was submitted that they should keep their eyes on. Karen explained that the entire plan was different from the template all the way down. Karen stated that she has a written version of all the goals, one of the new things in this template was for each of the sections in the plan, whether to have to do with eligibility, having to do with quality initiatives, etc. They asked us to provide goals that were going to be reporting on our progress on over the next two years. Karen stated that she has them written up and can forward them to the commission. Elizabeth Burke Bryant asked Karen if recertification was elongated from 6 month to 12. Karen stated that it was put into the plan; it is also in the draft [C Cap Policy](#) right now so basically it's been approved at all the lower levels. Karen believes Director Powell is running these changes by Secretary Costantino.

Blythe Berger, Department of Health: Bradley developed some common modules they did it with quality money from RF, it's for frontline for providers and they are testing them on Friday.

Larry Pucciarelli, DHS: The US Department of Education has established an office of Early Learning. It is going to be headed up by Jacqueline Jones. The Office for Head Start which is part of the Administration for Children and Families issued final regulations on the re-competition of programs. When the Act was passed in 2007 there were requirements that they develop a process where by programs that were low performing would not be business as usual. They are now saying that programs that are chronically low performing will be re-competed and even to the extent that all programs will now be on a five year cycle, rather than on indefinite funding. The class instrument is mentioned a lot in the regs. The Feds do a week long visit to a program, they do these visits every three years, they don't tell people they are coming, and they are picking classrooms randomly to look at. They are comparing some of this to National data. Laura stated that The National Association for Family Child Care also no longer gives advanced notice.

Chairwoman Diaz discussed the retreat which is on December 14, 2011 at the Warwick Public Library.

Chairwoman Diaz asked that the members review the minutes from the last meeting.

Mike Burk, retreat information: membership is needs to be looked at and who is attending regularly. Replace those not attending with people and agencies that attend on a regular basis. Looking at priorities from last retreat and how well they were achieved. Education of Legislator's around child care and the importance of child care especially in this economy. What are the commission's priorities and how are we going to get there.

Rachel Flum, additional retreat information: stated that Leanne mentioned that they have someone from NSL, (National Council of State Legislators) to talk about what other states are doing. They also talked about doing a budget piece.

Chair Diaz, retreat information: spoke about picking a day each year for "Child Care Day". Similar to a fair, with all the agencies, and child care

businesses. The fair could be at the State House, would bring attention to child care. Chair Diaz also suggested having it on a weekday when the legislators are here. Also to pay attention to the new legislators and invite them to a meeting.

Laura Mason Zeisler, retreat information: She stated that NAEYC has the week of the young child in April. She stated it would make sense to tie those pieces together. She also said she remembered about educating the Legislators, we had a committee, but that it didn't go anywhere. Laura suggested having actionable items when we leave the retreat.

Kate Begin: stated that April is a good month to do it, it's also National Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month. Kate would like to see the commission focus on the benefits of quality early care and education and what that means to life long learning and life long social and emotional confidence. If the speaker was 0-3 organization, they could talk about brain development. The problem is we tend default in this state to the money issue, we can't afford child care, should we be paying subsidies for other people's children, but if we turn it into an early learning, a brain development conversation, she believes we may have a bigger impact.

Chair Diaz thanked RI Kids Count for their donation of breakfast and lunch for the upcoming retreat. Chair Diaz asked the different departments/organizations to summarize what they have accomplished in 2011, so that we will know where we are. Chair Diaz asked if she could have that information prior to the retreat. She would like this information for the facilitator.

Leslie Gell, retreat: Commission role/function should be discussed.

Laura Mason Zeisler: how do we address legislators who are putting forth legislation, and let them know they should connect with all the parties that will be affected. Laura referenced Article 10 as an example.

Elizabeth Burke Bryant, RI Kids Count said they have someone in their office that tracks bills, Jennifer Capaldo. That includes bills on child care.

Chair Diaz has the research department track the child care bills for the commission. The budget can be challenging. Chair Diaz explained that the retreat is open to all members and their agencies and that if there are some

who would like to attend and are not members to let her know. Chair Diaz made a motion to adjourn.

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