

Early Childhood Education Cabinet Meeting

March 24, 2011 • 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

State Department of Education

SERC Classroom

25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown

ATTENDANCE

John Rathgeber Chairperson, CBIA	Chair, Representative of Business or Philanthropic Community	X	Patricia Rehmner Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services	Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Designee	
Catherine Abercrombie Representative	Member of the House of Representatives		Debra Johnson (for Kevin Sullivan) Dept. of Public Health	Representative of State Agency responsible for Health or Mental Health Care	X
Peter Palermino (for Claudette Beaulieu) Dept. of Social Services	Representative from State Agency Responsible for Child Care	X	Senator Andrea Stillman State Senator	Member of the State Senate	
Marisol Estrada-Soto Parent	Parent of child attending school in Priority District		David Title Superintendent, Fairfield Public Schools	Representative of the Local Education Agency	X
Harriet Feldlaufer Dept. of Education	Representative of the State Education Agency	X	Maria Synodi (for Anne Louise Thompson) Dept. of Education	Representative of the State Agency Responsible for Programs under 619 or Part C of the IDEA	X
Linda Goodman Dept. of Developmental Services	Representative of Entity Determined Relevant by the Governor	X	Eileen Ward Director, Children's Community Development Center	Representative of Local Providers of Early Childhood Education	X
Kathy Guay Director, Office of Policy & Management	Secretary of the Office of Policy & Management Designee	X	Grace Whitney Head Start Collaboration Officer	State Director of Head Start Collaboration	X
Joan Parris Director, Early Childhood Education, Norwalk CC	Representative of Institutions of Higher Education	X	Elaine Zimmerman Executive Director, Commission on Children	Executive Director of the Commission on Children	X
Vacant	Representative from Head Start Agency				

Documents Received:

The following documents were distributed:

- Minutes from the February 24, 2011 meeting
- Senate Bill 1106 Current vs. Future Early Childhood Landscape (prepared by Senator Beth Bye)
- NGA Issue Brief: Maximizing the Impact of State Early Childhood Home Visitation Programs
- 2011 Update: NACCRRRA's Ranking of Child Care Center Regulation and Oversight

A. Welcome and Introductions

John Rathgeber opened the meeting at 9:30 A.M.

B. Project Director

John Rathgeber reported that as part of the ARRA Head Start Grant application, a job announcement for project director was put forward through EASTCONN. After an application screening and interview process, a candidate has been selected. The Cabinet is working with EASTCONN on the hiring process and hopes to make an offer to the selected candidate very soon.

C. Work Groups

Each of the four priority work groups will have one chair that is a member of the Cabinet, and a co-chair that is an external stakeholder. External co-chairs are being selected based on their expertise in the relevant area.

Early Learning Standards Work Group

Harriet Feldlaufer reported that the co-chair for the Early Learning Standards Work Group is Dr. Dina Anselmi. Dr. Anselmi is a developmental psychologist at Trinity College and is currently the director of Trinity's Center for Teaching and Learning. Dr. Anselmi is also a founder and board member for the Trinity College Child Care Center as well as a board member for the Connecticut Housing Investment Fund. Dina's research interests include children's rights and family decision-making; gender role development and sex stereotyping of emotions; language development; and family and development. Dr. Anselmi was the recipient of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Academic Research Enhancement Award for her work on communicative effectiveness and presuppositional knowledge in children's narratives, as well as other national and college awards.

Data Work Group

Linda Goodman reported that the co-chair for the Data Work Group is Dr. Sheryl Horowitz. Dr. Horowitz is the Director of Community Research and Evaluation at the Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS). Her responsibilities include developing and implementing a data-driven agenda to assess the progress and success of the family of programs administered and operated by CAHS. Sheryl has worked in the fields of institutional research, healthcare, and human services, performing the roles of data analyst and research director. She has designed federally and locally funded research and conducted evaluation aimed at improving the health, welfare, and quality of life of low income and minority populations. Sheryl has both a B.A. in Anthropology and Elementary Education and received her PhD in Biological Anthropology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She has also completed post-doctoral work at UC Berkeley in Demography and at Stanford University in Population Ecology and Historical Fertility.

Workforce/Professional Development Work Group

Joan Parris reported that the co-chair for the Workforce/Professional Development Work Group is Dr. Alice Pritchard. Dr. Pritchard is the Executive Director of the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF). CWEALF is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women, girls and their families to achieve equal opportunities in their personal and professional lives. Dr. Pritchard has spent almost two decades conducting research, advocacy,

training and technical assistance on issues related to education and workforce development. She oversees CWEALF's research on the status of girls in education and provides presentations to a variety of audiences on education and training issues. Dr. Pritchard also worked with the Governor's Office for Workforce Competitiveness to support model programs and strategies for increasing the skills and career opportunities for low-wage and unemployed workers in Connecticut.

Families/Home Visitation Work Group

Elaine Zimmerman is in the process of securing a co-chair for the Families/Home Visitation work group but should be making an announcement soon.

D. Federal SAC Meeting and Karen Ray

John Rathgeber reported that a federal SAC meeting will take place in Washington D.C. on April 27-28. It was recommended that a three-member team from the Cabinet attend this meeting including the Project Director, Andrea Brinnel and one member. Peter Palermino and Grace Whitney will be attending on behalf of the Head Start Collaboration Office and the Office of Childcare.

On May 6, Karen Ray of Karen Ray Associates will spend the morning with the workgroup co-chairs, the Project Manager and other members of the leadership team. The afternoon will be spent with the full Cabinet.

Grace Whitney asked for clarification on the membership of the leadership team. The leadership team consists of: the chair of the Cabinet, the project director, co-chairs of work groups, and the state Head Start coordinator (pp.47 of the SAC ARRA Grant Application).

E. Statewide Early Childhood Conference

Maria Synodi reported that a statewide early childhood conference, *Together We Will*, will be held on April 7, 2011. The keynote speaker is Jana Martella, Executive Director of both the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE) and the National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA Licensing). She has co-authored a publication titled "Vision to Practice: Setting a New Course for Early Childhood Governance" (January 2011), which was sent to all Cabinet members and can be found at the following link: (<http://www.martella-dc.com/jana-martella/publications>)

Ms. Martella will be available on April 6 from 4-6 p.m. at the Middletown State Office Building to facilitate a discussion on the governance research detailed in her publication. Senator Beth Bye asked if legislators would be able to participate in this discussion. An email invitation will be sent to members of the Cabinet and Senator Bye, who is welcomed to invite any interested legislators. It was also requested that questions for Ms. Martella be submitted to Maria Synodi beforehand if possible.

F. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the February 24, 2011 meeting were approved. Grace Whitney asked to have a link to the supplemental information request regarding the home visiting program placed on the Cabinet's website.

G. Legislative Updates and Raised Bill 1106 – Senator Beth Bye

50/50 Bill

Beth Bye, state senator and co-chair of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, announced that the 50/50 bill for teacher requirements has been passed on consent in committee. The bill is now going to the Education Committee to be voted on. Current legislation reads that 100 percent of teachers in classrooms funded by state funds need to hold a bachelor's degree by 2015. The new bill reads that 50 percent of teachers will need to hold a bachelor's degree by 2015, with the other 50 percent holding an associate's degree. By 2020, 100 percent of teachers will need to hold a bachelor's degree. The bill no longer includes the early childhood teacher credential. Senator Bye reported that incredible gains have been made over the past years and we now have a trajectory that looks positive and accomplishable for 2020. She thanked the State Department of Education and Connecticut Charts-a-Course for all of the information they have offered.

Raised Bill 1106 –Department of Early Education

The goal of Raised Bill 1106 is to create a coordinated early childhood system while working with the Governor's consolidation of services. The Department of Early Education would begin in 2014, requiring planning to begin immediately. The Early Childhood Education Cabinet must have an integral part in this plan. Senator Bye's estimates that Connecticut has spent 1 billion dollars and still has the largest achievement gap in the country. Seven other states have created a Department of Early Education and none have lost any slots. A bill must be passed in order to obtain a fiscal note but the savings is estimated to be at least 10 percent a year for administrative expenses, resulting in more money for slots. A graphic comparing the current early childhood infrastructure to the infrastructure recommended in the bill was provided.

Senator Bye stated that there is one controversial part of the bill (Section 37) that allows family child care providers who accept CARE-4-KIDS to collectively bargain. This change would link quality improvement with wages. Peter Palermino asked if it was the intent to have family child care defined to be both family licensed and also Care-4-KIDS as the bill does not make that distinction. Senator Bye stated that the language refers to any family child care provider who receives state funding. Senator Bye clarified that the hope is that CARE-4-KIDS will be a part of the Department of Early Education and therefore would be able to participate in collective bargaining.

Grace Whitney voiced concerns over losing pieces of infant/toddler care. Senator Bye assumed that perhaps the concern comes from the fact that infant/toddler care has not been the focus, but stated that the shortage of infant/toddler care has been recognized.

Senator Bye reported that she has met with the Early Childhood Alliance (which represents 54 advocacy groups) and they were all very supportive. Senator Bye has also met with Connecticut's YWCAs (YWs) and YMCAs (YMs). Though the YWs voiced their concern about the pot of money changing, as their mission is to ultimately empower women, they are in support of any work that will increase wages for women. The YMs had concerns over the reduction of money for centers, assuming that if the rate goes up for family child care providers, the rate for center-based would decrease. Senator Bye stated that though this has not happened in other states, she understands their concern. Overall, the support of this bill has been favorable. The idea that a parent can go directly to the Department of Early Education is very attractive for parents.

John Rathgeber asked about the structure in leadership. (Massachusetts, for example, has three different commissioners who report to the board of education, and ultimately the secretary of education.) Senator Bye stated that having three commissioners of education (early education, elementary education and higher education) reporting to one secretary of education is very doable and would simplify things greatly.

Elaine Zimmerman thanked Senator Bye for a job well done and stated that the debate of this bill has brought much attention to early education. Regardless of the outcome, if this bill serves as a vehicle for people to understand systems reform and early education, it was a winner.

In closing, Senator Bye stated that though it has been hard to get passed the political issues, she believes progress will be made as parts of the bill are worked out. The major outcome was that regardless of political standpoint, the importance of early education was evident. Senator Bye thanked everyone for their time, hard work and input and will work to keep the Cabinet as updated and informed as possible.

H. Budget and Legislation

Elaine Zimmerman reported on Senate Bill 930 which address kindergarten entry age and Senate Bill 927, legislation regarding reading instruments other than the DRA.

I. Update on CCDF Grant

Peter Palermino updated the Cabinet on the Child Care and Developmental Fund (CCDF) grant. This grant, due July 1, brings federal dollars into the state. Public hearings will be scheduled in May. The grant to be out for review in early April. Mr. Palermino has called upon many groups for assistance including the Early Childhood Alliance, the Workforce/Professional Development Work Group of the Cabinet, and the State Department of Education (SDE). A webinar has been scheduled with Parent Power in April.

A question of whether this grant would be transferred to the SDE along with the child day care funds was posed. On July 1, proposed legislation transfers Quality Enhancement and Child Day Care Center funds from the Department of Social Services (DSS) to the SDE. The CCDF grant would still be a DSS responsibility. Kathy Guay explained in order to claim these federal dollars; it does not matter where the expenditure is as long as there is documentation of the services offered.

John Rathgeber thanked Mr. Palermino for all of his work on this grant, and for reaching out to many groups to ensure the highest quality of information is submitted. A large part of the role of the Cabinet is to understand the different agency/organization actions and relationships and to make engage stakeholders.

J. Public Comment

Connecticut Charts-a-Course Report

Darlene Ragozzine, Executive Director for Connecticut Charts-a-Course, shared “Connecticut’s Early Care & Education Workforce” report (this can be found on the Connecticut Charts-a-Course website: <http://www.ctcharts-a-course.org>). Connecticut Charts-a-Course received a grant from the Office of Workforce Competitiveness (OWC) to compile this report using data from their registry to help inform members in the field, the public and policymakers about what the state of the early

childhood workforce looks like in Connecticut. Data from over 7,000 individuals was gathered to give a profile of the workforce in terms of age, race, ethnicity, gender, experience and salary. Ninety-nine percent of publicly funded programs and approximately 50 percent of privately funded programs were represented. The goal is to eventually have everyone represented but it will take coordination and legislation (it is currently a voluntary system). The increase in the numbers for the private sector is a result of the requirement for each head teacher applicant must now come through the Registry, according to a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Public Health.

One of the areas highlighted in the report is the aggressive campaign to have all programs accredited. Deb Flis spoke on the comparison of Connecticut to California and Massachusetts in terms of accredited programs. The number of programs in those states is much higher than those in Connecticut; however, these accredited programs are on a decline, while Connecticut's newly accredited programs continue to increase.

In January, a pilot program took place for those submitting their materials to NAEYC for accreditation. NAEYC requires staff qualifications be documented as part of their accreditation process. The Registry was used to generate these reports and compile them into one page. This simplification will draw privately funded programs to the Registry because there is a direct benefit to them.

Any questions regarding this report they can be addressed to Darlene Ragozzine.

2011 Update on Child Care Centers in Connecticut

Linda Goodman distributed copies of a 2011 update on child care centers in Connecticut from the National Association of Child Care Center Resource and Referral. Connecticut is ranked 10th in regulations, but 49th in terms of actual oversight. Elaine Zimmerman suggested that the study be a topic for Cabinet discussion.

NGA Article on Home Visitation

Elaine Zimmerman distributed copies of "Maximizing the Impact of State Early Childhood Home Visitation Programs," an issue brief from NGA Center for Best Practices.

Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS)

Sam Dynowski from the Early Childhood Alliance spoke of the work that is coming up in the summer and fall around QRIS. There are several events planned including the Alliance retreat in July and a webinar in late summer. In September there will be regional community conversations regarding QRIS funded by a grant from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial fund. The Alliance hopes to present the findings at a Cabinet meeting later this year.

ConnPAT

Pam Langer from Connecticut Parents as Teachers (PAT) stated that she would like to raise the awareness that PAT is an existing program in Connecticut that is on the list of approved home visitation models from the federal government. PAT has been in the state of Connecticut for over 25 years. Additional information on PAT can be found on their website or by contacting Pam at

connpat@earthlink.net. Grace Whitney added that staff in 11 of 12 Early Head Start programs in the state are trained in PAT.

K. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.

L. Next Meeting

The next Cabinet meeting will be held on May 6 at CBIA from 1-4 p.m.