



Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet

Meeting of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet

December 19, 2013 • 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Middletown State Office Building

ATTENDANCE

Member	Member Type Required by Federal Statute		Member	Member Type Required by Federal Statute	
Leah Grenier, Chair <i>Principal Budget Specialist, Office of Policy & Management</i>	Secretary of the Office of Policy & Management Designee	X	David Morgan <i>Director, TEAM, Inc.</i>	Representative from Head Start Agency	
Catherine Abercrombie <i>State Representative</i>	Member of the House of Representatives		Joan Parris <i>Director, ECE, Norwalk CC</i>	Representative of Institutions of Higher Education	
Dante Bartolomeo <i>State Senator</i>	Member of the Senate		Laura Post, Senior Director, <i>Strategic Planning & Insights, LEGO Systems</i>	Representative from the Business or Philanthropic Community	X
Cathy Battista <i>President, FRC Alliance</i>	Representative from Family Resource Centers	X	Stefan Pryor <i>Commissioner, Dept. of Education</i>	Representative of the State Education Agency	X
Peter Palermino (for Claudette Beaulieu) <i>Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Social Services</i>	Representative from State Agency Responsible for Child Care	X	Edie Reichard <i>Director, Sleeping Giant Day Care</i>	Representative of a State-funded Child Care Center	X
Patricia Bryant -Beausoleil <i>Director, Putnam Family Resource Center</i>	Representative from a Local Education Agency		Maria Synodi <i>Special Education, Dept. of Education</i>	Representative of the State Agency Responsible for Programs under 619 or Part C of the IDEA	X
Marisol Estrada-Soto <i>Parent</i>	Parent		Stephen Tracy <i>Supt. Unified School District #2, Dept. of Children and Families</i>	Representative from the Department of Children and Families	X
Linda Goodman <i>Director, Birth to Three, Dept. of Developmental Services</i>	Representative of Entity Determined Relevant by the Governor	X	Eileen Ward <i>Director, Children's Community Development Center</i>	Representative of Local Providers of Early Childhood Education	X
Deb Johnson <i>Section Chief, Dept. of Public Health</i>	Representative of the State Agency Responsible for Health or Mental Health Care	X	Grace Whitney <i>Director, Head Start Collaboration Office</i>	State Director of Head Start Collaboration	X
Michelle Maggio <i>Parent</i>	Parent		Elaine Zimmerman <i>Exec. Dir., Commission on Children</i>	Executive Director of the Commission on Children	X

A. Welcome and Introductions

Leah Grenier called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

B. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the October 31, 2013 meeting were reviewed and accepted. Eileen Ward abstained.

C. DCF / Head Start Partnership

Grace Whitney and Nancy Dimauro presented on the DCF / Head Start Partnership. This presentation can be found on the Cabinet's website within the meeting documents posted for December 19, 2013.

(<http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/meetings.html>)

D. Office of Early Childhood (OEC) Updates

New Staff

Myra Jones-Taylor, Director of the OEC, introduced new staff members of the executive team including: Loree Armstrong, Executive Assistant, Diana Lejardi, Director of Communications, Julie Bisi who will be joining the Office in December as a Data Specialist, Charmaine Thomas who will be joining the Office in July to work with the Care4Kids program, Mary Farnsworth, Strategic Planning Manager, and Maggie Adair, Director of Government and Community Relations. Two consultants have also been hired as business analysts to work on the development of the Early Childhood Information System (ECIS).

Meeting with CAPSS

Members of the OEC have met with the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS). There are approximately 9,000 children receiving care in public schools, independent of Head Start and School Readiness. It is important that there be alignment between community programs for young children and public schools in order to create a continuum of high-quality services birth – grade 3. Discussions about QRIS and impact on license-exempt programs have begun. Mock inspections (with no penalty) by licensing staff will take place to gather information about barriers to licensing for public schools.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC)

Connecticut did not receive RTT-ELC funding. Though the news is disappointing, Connecticut has made significant accomplishments without funding from previous RTT-ELC competition (e.g., work force Core Knowledge and Competencies, Early Learning Standards, etc.). Going through this process as a fully integrated agency with centralized leadership created a true vision for the work that needs to be done. The focus moving forward will be on QRIS and a statewide technical assistance program.

Vision Statement

Myra distributed copies of the draft version of OEC's vision and mission statement which is as follows:

Our Vision: All of Connecticut's young children are safe, healthy, learning and thriving and are surrounded by nurturing adults who appreciate the importance of the first years of child's life.

Our Mission: To ensure that early childhood policy, funding and services support all young children in their development and support the essential roles of families, providers and communities.

This draft was formed based upon comments and suggestions from the OEC all-staff meeting held in November. Any feedback can be e-mailed to Mary Farnsworth (mary.farnsworth@ct.gov). Once finalized, the vision and mission statement will be posted on the OEC website.

E. New OEC Website

Diana Lejardi, Director of Communications, unveiled the new OEC website (www.ct.gov/oec). Diana explained that working within the state portal has its limitations, but the ultimate goal is to have a website where most of the users are able to find the information they seek in the fewest number of clicks. The information on the home page is grouped into two categories: families and providers. To maintain consistency for those who are familiar with the structure, the four divisions of the OEC serve as headers at the top of the homepage. Google Translate is available so that the website can be viewed in an extensive array of different languages. Social media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) has also been launched and will be used as additional conduits for news releases and updates.

F. Review of SAC Requirements

Andrea Brinnel distributed copies of a document that outlines the responsibilities of the Cabinet under the Head Start Act of 2007. A small group will meet to review this document and discuss what resources will be needed by the Cabinet in order to meet these responsibilities. (ARRA grant funding ended in September 2013.) Leah Grenier, Elaine Zimmerman, Maggie Adair, and Andrea Brinnel have volunteered as a subcommittee to complete this review and report back to the full Cabinet in February.

G. Home Visitation Forum

On December 2, 2013, the New England states convened to discuss home visitation policy, programs, data collection systems, braided financing, and communications. The goal of this forum was to have the New England states think regionally about sharing strengths and working toward common goals. The agenda and presentations from this forum are located on the Cabinet's website within the meeting documents posted for December 19, 2013. (<http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/meetings.html>)

H. NPR "Breakthroughs"

Elaine Zimmerman reported that National Public Television has selected the Parent Leader Training Institute (PLTI) program to be highlighted in a television show that will be broadcasted in over 50 cities. Updates on this program will be provided as soon as they become available.

I. State Public Health Actions to Prevent and Control Diabetes, Heart Disease, Obesity and Associated Risk Factors and Promote School Health

Dr. Mehul Delal, DPH, Kari Sullivan, SDE, Marcia Maillard, DPH and Missy Repko, CT Head Start T& TA Network presented on Healthy Connections, Connecticut's Coordinated Approach to School Health and an opportunity for a potential for a collaborative five-year grant between SDE and DPH. This presentation can be found on the Cabinet's website within the meeting documents posted for December 19, 2013. (<http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/meetings.html>)

J. QRIS

Eileen Ward requested that a meeting between the Cabinet's QRIS work group and OEC staff members take place to discuss next steps. The co-chairs of the QRIS feel responsibility for the time and energy people of the work group had put into this work, and would like to know more about the Cabinet's view for the future of QRIS in Connecticut. Also, contracted time remains for consultants that can be used to

refine the work. A suggestion was made that QRIS be added to the Cabinet's next meeting agenda in February.

K. Other Business

Peter Palermino talked about the importance of emergency preparedness and recommended that relevant websites be updated accordingly.

L. Adjournment

With no public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

The next Cabinet meeting is Thursday, February 27, 2013, in the Middletown State Office Building (25 Industrial Park Road), in the SERC community room.