

Meeting of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet

December 22, 2011 • 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Middletown State Office Building, Conference Room 3

25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown

ATTENDANCE

Member	Member Type Required by Federal Statute		Member	Member Type Required by Federal Statute	
David Title, Chair <i>Superintendent of Fairfield PS</i>	Representative of a Local Education Agency	X	David Morgan <i>Vice President, TEAM, Inc.</i>	Representative from Head Start Agency	X
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	X
Cathy Battista <i>President, FRC Alliance</i>	Representative from Family Resource Centers	X	Kathy Queen (for Edie Reichard) <i>Director, Sleeping Giant Day Care</i>	Representative of a State-funded Child Care Center	X
Peter Palermino (for Claudette Beaulieu) <i>Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Social Services</i>	Representative from State Agency Responsible for Child Care	X	Andrea Stillman <i>State Senator</i>	Member of the Senate	X
Harriet Feldlaufer <i>Chief, Bureau of Teaching & Learning, Dept. of Education</i>	Representative of the State Education Agency	X	Kevin Sullivan <i>Health Associate, Dept. of Public Health</i>	Representative of the State Agency Responsible for Health or Mental Health Care	
Linda Goodman <i>Director, Birth to Three, Dept. of Developmental Services</i>	Representative of Entity Determined Relevant by the Governor	X	Maria Synodi (for Anne Louise Thompson) <i>Chief, Special Education, Dept. of Education</i>	Representative of the State Agency Responsible for Programs under 619 or Part C of the IDEA	X
Anzelmo Graziosi <i>Licensed Attorney</i>	Representative from the Business or Philanthropic Community	X	Eileen Ward <i>Director, Children's Community Development Center</i>	Representative of Local Providers of Early Childhood Education	X
Leah Grenier <i>Budget Specialist, Office of Policy & Management</i>	Secretary of the Office of Policy & Management Designee	X	Grace Whitney <i>Director, CT Head Start Association Collaboration Office</i>	State Director of Head Start Collaboration	X
Janice Gruendel <i>Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Children & Families</i>	Commissioner of the Department of Children & Families	X	Dawn Homer-Bouthiette (for Elaine Zimmerman) <i>Exec. Dir., Commission on Children</i>	Executive Director of the Commission on Children	X
Michelle Maggio <i>Parent</i>	Parent of a Child Attending School in a Priority District		Vacant	Parent	

Documents Received:

- Minutes from the October 27, 2011 meeting
- Project Director's Report
- IDEA Section 619: IDEA Preschool Grants Program (PowerPoint presentation)
- Letter from Governor Malloy re: education reform
- Schedule of 2012 Cabinet meeting dates
- Right From the Start handout
- Head Start Roadmap to Excellence: The Training and Technical Assistance System

A. Welcome and Introductions

David Title opened the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

Kathy Queen for Edie Reichard and Dawn Homer-Bouthiette for Elaine Zimmerman were welcomed to participate as alternates.

B. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the October 27, 2011, meeting were approved unanimously.

C. Work Group Updates

Sherry Linton-Massiah distributed a draft version of the Cabinet's needs assessment which is required by legislation. Cabinet members were asked to review this report and offer feedback by January 5, 2012 to allow for their comments to be included in the final version.

Data Systems:

The last meeting of the Data Systems work group had a presentation by Bennett Pudlin and Jim Farnham from the Connecticut Data Collaborative which gave an overview of the current status of the ECE portal. The work group has made a commitment to collaborate with the Connecticut Data Collaborative and will work with them on a list of aggregate data needed from each department for the portal. It was also reported the Connecticut has applied for a federal statewide longitudinal data systems grant that will focus on early childhood. This application can be found on the Cabinet's website.

Professional Development/Workforce:

At the last meeting of the Professional Development/Workforce work group, a presentation was given by Connecticut Charts-a-Course (CCAC) that highlighted the additional features of the Registry that are being added.

Early Learning Standards:

The Early Learning Standards work group is waiting for the second proposal from an external consultant who to address additional and existing crosswalks. The first proposal came from the National Center for Children & Families; the second proposal will come from SRI International. The work group will review both proposals and determine which proposal best meets CT's needs.

Family Involvement/Home Visitation:

Meetings of the Family Involvement/Home Visitation work group have focused on the completion of the application for federal funds for 0-3 home visitation. Information on the outcome of the application will be posted on the Cabinet website as soon as it is available.

The work group is looking for a representative from the Department of Children and Families to replace Rudy Brooks.

More information on the four priority area work groups can be found in the Project Director's report on the Cabinet's website at: <http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/project-director.html>

D. Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan

Peter Palermino reminded the Cabinet that action items from work groups are still needed to further strengthen the CCDF plan. Connecticut has summited a draft plan which was approved, however, this plan can be modified throughout the year in order to align with measurements that will be reported at the end of next year.

Sherry Linton-Massiah reported that a work group co-chair orientation is being planned to improve the groups' capacities to link the work of each group to the CCDF plan, and other efforts and initiatives as needed.

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

In light of the disappointing news that Connecticut was not one of the finalists for the RTT-ELC grant, Governor Malloy has indicated through a letter to the General Assembly that the work will move forward nonetheless. This letter, outlining dozens of partners who will collaboratively work towards the early childhood agenda, was distributed to Cabinet members and can be found on the Cabinet's website.

Cross Sector Consulting, the grant writers, have compiled a section by section analysis based on the reviewers scores and comments. It was noted that Connecticut was 20 out of 38, with the top nine being funded. QRIS and workforce development were the two greatest areas of weaknesses. SDE is working on a high-level summary which will inform the general public how Connecticut fared. The summary will be posted on the Cabinet website when it is available.

Dr. Janice Gruendel noted that Massachusetts has been working on their voluntary QRIS system for the past few years and have made great strides by involving information partners, as well as licensed partners. Dr. Gruendel suggested that Dr. Sherri Killins, Commissioner of Early Education and Care for Massachusetts, be invited to speak with the work group, or the Cabinet as a whole to further inform our work.

F. Child Day Care Program Transition

The Child Day Care program transition study group was assembled to focus on fulfilling the requirements of Public Act 11-61, to coordinate the School Readiness and Child Day Care programs. The work group has met eight times in two months and has drafted recommendations to make the School Readiness and Child Day Care programs one unified system. A report that outlines these recommendations is due to the General Assembly on January 1. The draft has been reviewed by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), and the State Departments of Education (SDE) and Social

Services (DSS). Once final approval is given, changes in legislation reflecting these recommendations will need to be developed. This report will be made available to the public on the Cabinet's website.

G. National Technical Assistance Centers

A list of national technical assistance consultants compiled by the Office of Child Care was distributed and can be found on the Cabinet's website. The leadership team will develop a process for contacting the training and technical assistance consultants.

Grace Whitney added that Head Start has also reorganized their training and technical assistance program. Currently, there is a national center for best practice in a variety of topics or service areas: Early Head Start, quality teaching and learning, cultural and linguistic responsiveness, program management and fiscal operations, parent/family community engagement and health. Trainings will be held through state, regional and national Head Start Association meetings and conferences, and materials will be brought into the training and technical assistance center in Connecticut.

H. First 1,000 Days, Part II

Dr. Janice Gruendel reported that a group originally formed five years ago is reconvening to focus on science and well-being from the period birth through age 3. Dr. Gruendel led a team to the New England Summit on early development, science and child welfare hosted by Casey Family Services in October 2011. Connecticut worked with other states to build upon the intersection between science and early childhood welfare. There is an opportunity to have Jack Shonkoff's group assist with this work. More information about the First 1,000 Days, Part II initiative at DCF is forthcoming and will be presented at the next Cabinet meeting.

I. Right From the Start

David Nee, Executive Director of the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund gave an update on Right from the Start, an initiative that evolved from Discovery communities, parents, providers and stakeholders in an effort to create a coordinated comprehensive early care and education delivery system at the local level.

"The Right from the Start team operates on the premise that an early education and child development system must include local decision-making structures, parent engagement, results-based community plans, integration of state and local efforts and a thorough evaluation of progress."

The work of the Right from the Start team is being completed in the following phases:

- Phase 1 – Design (November 2010 - March 2011)
- Phase 2 – System Analysis (April – August 2011)

- Phase 3 – Vision and Values (September – October 2011)
- Phase 4 – System Design (October – December 2011)
- Phase 5 – Implementation/Prototyping and Monitoring (January 2012 – ongoing)

J. IDEA Part B Presentation

Maria Synodi, Preschool Special Education program manager for the State Department of Education gave a presentation of IDEA Part B. The presentation can be found on the Cabinet’s website:

<http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/presentations.html>

K. Additional Cabinet Work Groups

David Title reported that three newly proposed work groups of the Cabinet are under consideration: T-QRIS, Health and Partnerships. The Partnerships work group will be a topic of discussion at the January leadership team but approval of the T-QRIS and Health work groups was given. The T-QRIS work group will be chaired by Eileen Ward and Deb Flis. The Health work group will be chaired by Dr. Grace Whitney and a representative from DPH.

The current process for work groups is as follows:

1. Work group is formed
2. Co-chairs are named
3. Work groups are populated after Cabinet leadership team review of proposed membership
4. A work group plan is developed
5. Work group plan is brought to the Cabinet for discussion and approval

L. Public Comment

A question was posed regarding the inclusion of mental health in the newly named Health work group. Grace Whitney stated that the group will focus on mental health, oral health, nutrition and physical activity.

Maggie Adair from the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance stated that the letter from the Governor to the General Assembly was encouraging in terms of stakeholder groups who will be brought to the table.

M. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

N. Next Meeting

The next Cabinet meeting will be held on January 26, 2012, at the State Office Building in Middletown, SERC Community Room from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.