



Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet

Meeting of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet

August 23, 2012 • 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Middletown State Office Building, SERC Community Room
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	Deb Johnson <i>Section Chief, Dept. of Public Health</i>	Representative of the State Agency Responsible for Health or Mental Health Care	X
Catherine Abercrombie <i>State Representative</i>	Member of the House of Representatives	X	Michelle Maggio <i>Parent</i>	Parent	
Cathy Battista <i>President, FRC Alliance</i>	Representative from Family Resource Centers	X	David Morgan <i>Vice President, TEAM, Inc.</i>	Representative from Head Start Agency	X
Peter Palermino (for Claudette Beaulieu) <i>Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Social Services</i>	Representative from State Agency Responsible for Child Care	X	Joan Parris <i>Director, ECE, Norwalk CC</i>	Representative of Institutions of Higher Education	X
Marisol Estrada-Soto <i>Parent</i>	Parent	X	Edie Reichard <i>Director, Sleeping Giant Day Care</i>	Representative of a State-funded Child Care Center	X
Harriet Feldlaufer <i>Chief, Bureau of Teaching & Learning, Dept. of Education</i>	Representative of the State Education Agency		Andrea Stillman <i>State Senator</i>	Member of the Senate	
Linda Goodman <i>Director, Birth to Three, Dept. of Developmental Services</i>	Representative of Entity Determined Relevant by the Governor	X	Maria Synodi (for Chief of Special Education Bureau) <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, Head Start Collaboration Office</i>	State Director of Head Start Collaboration	X
Stephen Tracy (for Janice Gruendel) <i>Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Children & Families</i>	Commissioner of the Department of Children & Families	X	Elaine Zimmerman <i>Exec. Dir., Commission on Children</i>	Executive Director of the Commission on Children	X

Documents Received:

- Minutes from the June 28, 2012 meeting
- Project Director's Report
- Cabinet Fiscal Report
- Definition of School Readiness Flyer

A. Welcome and Introductions

David Title opened the meeting at 9:33 a.m. Dr. Stephen Tracy was welcomed as Dr. Janice Gruendel’s designee from the Department of Children and Families.

B. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the June 28, 2012, meeting were approved.

C. Legislative Updates

Representative Abercrombie stated that she is extremely proud of the successes in this last session. She noted that education was a major topic of the session. She thanked Cabinet members for their support.

D. Work Group Updates

Data Systems:

The work group co-chairs, project director of the Cabinet and the State Support Team (National Center on Educational Statistics) developed a comprehensive report of the June, 2012 Data Roundtable. This report along with a summary of essential policy questions will be posted on the Cabinet’s website. The work group will continue to work with the planning team to respond to these questions. Commissioners of state agencies have been meeting on the subject of data sharing.

Professional Development/Workforce:

The work group continues to focus on teacher competencies as they relate to professional development and training. Connecticut Charts-a-Course (CCAC) has conducted an alignment study of early childhood teacher core knowledge competencies that has been reviewed by the work group. CCAC and the work group will present on their status at the September Cabinet meeting.

Early Learning Standards:

The initial draft of the Early Learning and Development Standards are currently being reviewed by in-state experts. Calls for proposals were posted for content and age validation of the standards. Eight proposals were received. The workgroup selected NAEYC to conduct the content validation study.

The work group determined that additional thought needed to be given to the research methodology required to conduct an age validation study. The work group is gathering expert information about conducting an age validation study and will put forth an updated call for proposals with specific methodological requirements later this year.

Family Involvement/Home Visitation:

In June, members of the work group participated in the Zero to Three Policy Institute. ChildFIRST was showcased as a proven program and is considered to be a national model. At the conference,

states were charged with developing strategies to integrate home visitation into the early childhood education system. These strategies are posted on the Cabinet's website at: <http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/family-involvement--home-visitiation.html>. Also posted on the Cabinet's website is the Colorado framework for integration, which is being considered as a possible tool to guide the integration of home visiting into CT's early childhood system.

T-QRIS:

The work group continues to meet twice a month. A draft of Guiding Principles for a CT T-QRIS was finalized and initial work plan strategies developed. They can be found at: <http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/t-qris.html>

Recommendations developed in 2008 by a group convened by the previous cabinet, as well as information in the recent Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant application are being used as resources.

Health Promotions:

Though the designation of a co-chair is still pending, prospective members for the work group have been chosen and formal invitations have been sent.

Public/Private Partnerships:

Anzelmo Graziosi, ECE Cabinet member and Richard Sussman, Director of the Brighter Futures Initiative for the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving are serving as co-chairs of this work group. Work group members are currently being identified.

E. Planning Office

Carlota Schechter of the Early Childhood Planning Office gave a brief update on the work of the planning team. Myra Jones-Taylor has been meeting monthly with Commissioners of state agencies to discuss early childhood systems; building the initial focus is on data sharing. The planning team is currently conducting a "listening tour," where they individually speak to a broad range of stakeholders and gather information and suggestions about an integrated early childhood system. At the conclusion of the "listening tour", the planners will share what they have learned on the listening tour with each other to inform the development of the plan to create an integrated early childhood system in CT. A question was asked by Elaine Zimmerman on how the planning team utilized outcome goals and measures to determine direction of plan and system design.

F. Fiscal Report

A summary of the Cabinet's expenditures for FY 2011-2012 was reviewed. The Cabinet is currently being funded from the federal ARRA grant through the Head Start Act. The current funding period is at the end of year two of the three-year grant. Confirmation of non-federal matching funds will be collected at the end of August. It was noted that there has been no difficulty in obtaining commitments from agencies and other entities to provide the non-federal matching funds.

G. Connecticut Definition of School Readiness

Iris Rich and Maggie Adair (on behalf of Monette Ferguson) presented the “Connecticut definition of school readiness”, developed by a representative broad stakeholder group including advocates, public schools, state agencies, teachers' unions, health professionals, etc. This definition was developed in response to a national trend for states to have a definition of school readiness. The definition was loosely based on work by the National Academy of Pediatrics.

Discussion centered about using the term “school readiness.” Connecticut has a branding issue with the term, as the state funded preschool program in CT is named “School Readiness”. Though a point of concern, it was ultimately decided by the committee to move forward with the term school readiness as this is consistent with national nomenclature.

Cabinet members and members of the public voiced their concern on this issue, giving examples of daily instances in which “school readiness” is often confused with the School Readiness program. It was decided that the document be referred to the Cabinet Leadership Team for further discussion.

H. Public Comment

Sonya Ahuja from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund thanked the Cabinet for taking the Definition of School Readiness framework into further discussion as the final decision will have far reaching effects in informing policies and decisions at the community level.

Darlene Ragozzine from Connecticut Charts-a-Course informed members that the scholarship window is open until September 14. If there are any questions, individuals can visit the Connecticut Charts-a-Course website (<http://ctcharts.org/>).

Jessica Stewart from Meriden School Readiness stated that the definition of school readiness will be very helpful to programs and suggested that changing the name to “definition of being school ready” will avoid some confusion.

I. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Early Childhood Cabinet will be held on Thursday, September 27, at the State Office Building in Middletown, SERC Community Room from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. There will be no Cabinet meeting in October, a planning retreat will held in lieu of the regular Cabinet meeting on October 12th.