

Meeting of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet

September 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	Joan Parris <i>Director, ECE, Norwalk CC</i>	Representative of Institutions of Higher Education	X
Catherine Abercrombie <i>State Representative</i>	Member of the House of Representatives		Edie Reichard <i>Director, Sleeping Giant Day Care</i>	Representative of a State-funded Child Care Center	X
Cathy Battista <i>President, FRC Alliance</i>	Representative from Family Resource Centers	X	Andrea Stillman <i>State Senator</i>	Member of the Senate	
Peter Palermino (for Claudette Beaulieu) <i>Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Social Services</i>	Representative from State Agency Responsible for Child Care	X	Kevin Sullivan <i>Health Associate, Dept. of Public Health</i>	Representative of the State Agency Responsible for Health or Mental Health Care	
Harriet Feldlauffer <i>Chief, Bureau of Teaching & Learning, Dept. of Education</i>	Representative of the State Education Agency	X	Marie 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
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
Anzelmo Graziosi <i>Licensed Attorney</i>	Representative from the Business or Philanthropic Community		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		Elaine Zimmerman <i>Executive Director, Commission on Children</i>	Executive Director of the Commission on Children	X
Kathy Guay <i>Director, Office of Policy & Management</i>	Secretary of the Office of Policy & Management Designee	X	Vacant	Representative from Head Start Agency	
Michelle Maggio <i>Parent</i>	Parent of a Child Attending School in a Priority District		Vacant	Parent	

Documents Received:

The following documents were distributed:

- Minutes from the August 25, 2011 meeting
- Project Director's Report
- Connecticut's Head Start State Collaboration Office Overview (PowerPoint presentation)

A. Welcome and Introductions

David Title opened the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

B. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the August 25, 2011, meeting were approved.

C. Work Group Reports

Data Systems:

The Data Systems work group met on September 7, 2011, with a focus on the review of the unique identifier map and its relation to the data tables within the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant application. Agencies must now determine the feasibility of adding birth certificate numbers as an additional field to existing documents and data bases in order to facilitate interoperability of our current systems. An MOU has been drafted to outline the agreement of participating agencies to share data.

Professional Development/Workforce:

The Professional Development/Workforce work group met on September 13, 2011, and reviewed professional development (PD) opportunities offered by higher education, non-degree-based programs, and other regularly offered trainings. A Connecticut Early Childhood Education Teacher Credential process, awaiting State Board of Education approval, was shared. The work group will continue to develop the PD inventory and reconvene a consortium to determine next steps in the ECE Teacher Credential process.

Early Learning Standards:

The Early Learning Standards work group meeting was rescheduled for October 4, 2011. A subgroup has been developed to respond to standards-related topics within the RTT-ELC grant application. A draft of the Guiding Principles for Standards is in development. The existing Infant/Toddler Guidelines, Head Start Early Learning Framework, Preschool Curriculum Framework, and Preschool Assessment Framework are all being reviewed in order to address alignment with existing standards and to identify gaps between the different standards.

Family Engagement/Home Visitation:

The Family Engagement/Home Visitation work group met on September 19, 2011, to conduct a comprehensive review of home visitation models currently being implemented in Connecticut. A subgroup submitted this information to the RTT-ELC grant writing team on the history and current status of those programs. Representatives from these programs will develop a map that outlines their offerings.

Systems Building Initiatives Matrix

An Early Childhood Education Systems Building Initiatives Matrix was drafted and sent out for feedback. This matrix will be posted to the Cabinet’s website once finalized.

The full Project Director’s report can be found on the Cabinet’s website at:

<http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/project-director.html>.

D. Child Day Care Program Transition

The OPM/SDE/DSS Study Group meets bi-weekly and has been addressing issues related to program eligibility, governance and management. The group will meet with five individuals from communities across the state that receive funding but have different governance structures to determine pros and cons of each in order to move recommendations forward but to also be sensitive to differences that exist between the programs being studied. Recommendations could be vetted as early as late November. Comments from those present at these meetings all reaffirmed the positive direction that is being taken with this work.

E. Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office Overview

Grace Whitney, Ph.D., director of Connecticut's Head Start State Collaboration Office, presented an overview of the goals and activities of the Office. Head Start is a federal to local program in which funds flow directly to communities. A liaison is placed in each state for the purpose of connecting Head Start program services to high-need families throughout the state. This overview presentation can be found on the Cabinet's website at: <http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/presentations.html>

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

Those who attended the September 8, 2011 Public Comment event stated that they were pleased with the turnout and with the Governor's heart-felt opening remarks. On September 13, 2011, Elizabeth Donahue, the Governor's Director of Policy, Charlene Russell-Tucker, Associate Commissioner of Education, and Harriet Feldlaufer, Bureau Chief of Teaching and Learning, met with the Congressional Office in Washington D.C. regarding their support of Connecticut's application.

A grant-writing team has been hired and meets with the leadership team three times a week. Eight participating agencies/entities (DSS, SDE, OPM, DDS, DCF, DPF, Head Start, and Cabinet) attend. The 13 data tables in the grant application are almost fully complete. Work groups have been assembled to concentrate on the individual sections that have been selected for the application.

Necessary letters of support/intent must not only state support of the application but must now include specific roles in supporting the application.

G. Public Comment

Darlene Ragozzine, Director of Connecticut Charts-a-Course, asked why Section D2 of the application is not being addressed. The decision not to address Section D2 was a result of the need for Section D1 to present a set of uniform competencies and skills of every sector in the workforce. As no uniform set of competencies is currently evident, the leadership team made the decision not to address this section.

George Hensinger from Connecticut Parent Power announced that Representative Cafero has appointed a “parent or guardian of a child who attends or attended a School Readiness program” to the Cabinet. Information is forthcoming.

Jeffrey Daniels from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund offered support and assistance in terms of the RTT-ELC grant application.

David Title presented a proclamation from the Governor’s Office to John Rathgeber for his dedication and hard work as chair of the Cabinet.

H. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

I. Next Meeting

The next Cabinet meeting will be held on October 27, 2011, at the State Office Building in Middletown, Conference Room 3, from 9:30-11:30 a.m.