



Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative

AECCS PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

DATE: July 14, 2009 -- TIME: 9 - 11 a.m.

Members Present: JoAnn Bolick, David Deere, Judy Eddington, Cindy Hogue, Mary Holder, Dennis Kuo, Carol Lee, Sonja McKinley, Sherri Jo McLemore, Richard Nugent, Sheena Olson, Ann Patterson, Sandra Reifeiss, Scotty Smittle (for Carolyn Marsh), Kathy Stegall, Dan Sullivan, Kenza Wesley, and Lillie Wichinsky.

Staff: Martha Hiatt and Paula C. Watson
Consultant: Deborah Gangluff

Martha Hiatt called the meeting to order. Self-Introductions were made by the by the group. Martha informed the Council members that AECCS was only funded \$105,000 instead of \$140,000 this grant period. Since funds were cut on the Federal level, all of the ECCS projects were partially funded this period. However, there is a possibility that the full \$140,000 will be restored by the end of the grant year.

Agenda Item #1: DCCECE Proposed Projects - American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

Discussion: Kathy Stegall presented a report on the proposed projects in DCCECE under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The funds are available through September 2010. The Division will receive \$25,000,000, with \$19,000,000 to be used to serve low-income families. Since these are short-term funds, projects will be started while looking for funds to continue programs after the fund expiration date. A specified amount must be reserved for infant/toddler programs to expand services..

Some of the proposed projects include the following:

- Developing and distributing additional TIPS (Teaching Important Parenting Skills)/Brief Parenting Interventions.
- Increase usage of Al's Pals and Al's Pals for Family Child care.
- Increase the number of children enrolled in the Voucher program (low income)—eliminating waiting list.

The funds will also provide for placing a Child Health Coordinator—Infant/Toddler Specialist in each of the Resource and Referral Centers. The Division has already sent one person from Kids First to Child Care Health Consultant specialized training in North Carolina. Three or four additional persons will receive this training. When the training is finished, the Child Care Health Consultants will help develop a program specifically for Arkansas.

Continued on Page 2

Agenda Item #1, Continued: DCCECE Proposed Projects - ARRA

Discussion: The QRIS Standards are going to be evaluated. An evaluation is being set up on the front end. The implementation team is interested in knowing whether the standards and guidelines make a difference. The team wants to measure what makes the difference, based on research. They will be looking at the written standards that make up the rating system.

Under the ABCD II program, the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education will be piloting an ASQ and ASQ/SE program with a limited number (10) of child care providers. This study will be helpful to QRIS. Resource and Referral Centers will be actively involved and one Resource and Referral Center will be the lead entity. The Division has already sent a few trainees to receive the training.

A group of pediatricians will need to participate. They will be part of a group that will be formed to set up a protocol for child care workers to use by January 2010. This group will also include representatives from the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, the Department of Education, Medical Homes and Social-Emotional Health Work Groups. It all supports moving towards higher quality.

The ABCD task force has been invited to submit a final proposal for ABCD III. Only 12 states were selected to submit proposals. Five will be funded. It may be possible to integrate some facets of the ASQ program into the proposal. One of the major strengths is the partnerships that exist in Arkansas. The Partnership Council will serve as the advisory group. Priority will be given to states where screenings are already underway.

Agenda Item #2: Family to Family Health Information Center

Discussion: Dennis Kuo distributed a handout and updated the group on the Family to Family Health Information Center that is being established in Arkansas. A copy of the handout is attached to the minutes. The goal is to have a center within the Disability Coalition. The same telephone number will be used, but all materials will be different. The grant will provide a central place to involve and assist families with children and youth (up to age 18) with special health care needs. A director will be hired within the next two months. The grant is for three years, and it is just enough for a skeleton operation to get the center up and running. A decision has not been made about a governing board.

Agenda Item #3: Reports from AECCS Work Groups

Discussion: Reports were given by one of the Co-Chairs of each work group:

Early Care and Education— Sandra Reifeiss reported that this group is just getting organized under the new grant. At their recent meeting, they oriented new members, examined past accomplishments, reviewed the new grant goals, and added one new goal related to Inclusion of Special Needs.

Continued on Page 3

Agenda Item #3, Continued: Reports from AECCS Work Groups

Discussion: Reports from Work Groups continued:

Medical Homes— Richard Nugent reported that this work group has been very active since last Winter. He shared a handout with the definition of "What is a Medical Home" as approved by the work group, based on the American Academy of Pediatrics' definition. He also mentioned a tool kit will be developed related to Medical Homes.

Social-Emotional Health— Carol Lee reported using a handout that listed the goals and actions related to each goal. The handout provided a summary of the status of the goals.

Parent Education and Family Support Task Force— Sherri Jo McLemore reported for this Task Force, which is a merger of the two work groups. The group is working to identify Parent Education programs in Arkansas. They are approaching organizations asking how they can support them in their work. The task force would like to develop a set of core competencies for Parent Education and Family Support. The group is considering asking Arkansas Parenting Education Network (APEN) if they can lead a track at their annual meeting in October.

The Community Café project is ongoing. Ten persons were trained to do local cafés. There are currently two local cafes. There are monthly conference calls. We hope to have the cafés take off in the fall.

Agenda Item #4: Survey Results -- AECCS Evaluation

Discussion: Deborah Gangluff reported on the results of the survey based on the previous grant year. Only 15 surveys were returned. (See attachment containing rewards.)

Agenda Item #6: Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

Next Meeting Date: September 15, 2009

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Paula C. Watson
Administrative Support
DHS/DCCECE/AECCS