

Early Intervention Council



Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting	Wyoming Early Intervention Council	Date	January 12, 2021	
Chair/Facilitator	Wendy Warren	Time	3:00PM	
Location	Google Meet	Scribe	Judy Juengel	
Members In Attendance	Last	First	From	Represents
	Beastrom	Jamie	Region 3	Provider
	Bush	James	WDH	State Medicaid Director
	Davis	Jen	Governor's Office	Health Advisor
	Earnshaw	Mavis	WY Dept. of Insurance	Health Policy analyst
	Gamble	Wendy	Converse County	Schools
	Hibbard	Debra	DFS	
	Johnson	Jamin	Public Health	Child Health
	Kugler	Mary	Wyoming Child & Family Development, Inc.	Head Start Agency
	Pedersen	Kelli	Parent Rep	Parent Rep
	Pena	Shawna	Public Health	Rural and Frontier Health
	Rone	Alisha	CDC Casper	CDS/Providers
	Warren	Wendy	WIND	Personnel Preparation
	Wasserberger	Jeff	WY Legislature	State Senator/Legislative Rep
Members Absent	Shannon Cranmore, Senator Wasserburger			

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Guests

Christine Demers, Judy Juengel, Kim Bock, Amy Reyes

Discussion Items

January 12, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 3:01 PM by Wendy Warren, WY EIC Chair.

Reading of the mission by Alisha Rone

Reading of the charter by Judy Juengel

Welcome from Wendy Warren. Wendy reviews the agenda.

Call for additions to agenda- none.

Self- Introductions and Role of Guests and EIC Members and Updates

Amy Reyes, WDE Early Learning Specialist- we are staying busy as ever more specifically right now my main focus has been keeping the TANF sites up and going with restrictions and monitoring virtual learning plans. One of our TANF sites will be closing our doors at the end of February. We have to do some restructuring of funds. Still trying to get Striving Readers grant administered to 43 different districts. We are trying to get all of the governor's emergency education relief money out as those apps all need to be in by the 15th. We did have a small success in that all of the children in the TANF program will have WISER IDs as well. We just got this approval to move forward a couple of days ago.

Alisha Rone, CDC Director, CDS President- CDCs have obviously been busy with legislation. It's taken a lot of my time. We did get 22% cut to our Part C per child amount. We were grateful it wasn't more. On Dec 1 we had our child count and obviously due to COVID our counts were down. This was about \$274,000 loss plus the decrease in count was another \$300,000. Decreased count was due to COVID. Parents are pulling kids out and don't want to send them. Have three classrooms shut down due to COVID and 24 staff are out. One thing we are doing is when staff have to go out to visit other preschools we have been using our mobile van a lot to provide services. We have had to get really creative. We are up for vaccines in the next week.

Christine Demers, Part C Coordinator- the agenda has altered a little bit. We have Heather Babbitt on to speak about the unit. Small change to the agenda-

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Debra Hibbard, DFS- happy to be part of this team. Child protection referrals went down due to COVID as a lot of referral systems are through the schools. Worked with WDE and districts on how to keep kids safe during that time. When schools reopened the referrals increased. Family First Referral Prevention Act- working with families in keeping children at home when it is safe to do so. Community family support forum that Cari Cuffney has been working on has resulted in good partnerships. Meets monthly and it is statewide and talks about what is happening in communities. Won't talk about budget decreases.

Heather Babbitt, Deputy Administrator- provide some updates later in the agenda.

Helena Wagner, Headstart- Feels like it's been a long time since we met. Commend everybody for all that you have done in response to some difficult times and really coming together for kids. I have Mary to provide most of HS updates. State Advisory Council for EC- we did receive a renewal grant so we can expect some early childhood specific funding for next three years. That's all I have for now.

Dr. James Bush, Medical Director- finalized a letter promoting EPSDT which includes developmental screening and immunizations. Included a link to my307 wellness app. Every woman will learn about the Bright Futures program and hopefully will be compelled to download the app. Debra and I were in a meeting recently to find ways to get information sharing about kids taken into DFS custody and access to our community health records. New foster parents will be able to see diagnosis, medications, allergies, etc. Something I am excited about is we were able to secure 1 million dollars for remote patient monitoring and we are inviting hospitals and clinics to apply for those.

Jamin Johnson, Public Health, Child Health Program Manager- from our standpoint we are working on new 5 year priorities that span across all the domains in the unit. We are really excited to be able to work with a national consultant to make some improvements to children with special healthcare needs program. Working on increasing family engagement.

Jamie Beastron, R3 FSC- serve Weston and Crook counties. We were fortunate to have our Dec 1 count similar to last year's count. Continue to work with families.

Jen Davis, Senior Policy Advisor, Governor's Office- a few quick updates. Legislature met today for the first time and will put out a legislative schedule. Will meet next week for 8 days and hopefully on site meetings in March depending on COVID. EC bill is something this group will have on radar and other education bills and the budget. Alisha mentioned the count will be down. We were not able to do an executive order to use last year's count but there is a note for the legislature to consider using the count from last year.

Kathy Escobedo, EIEP Unit Manager- Heather is going to give a robust update for our unit and I wanted to mention that our CDCs are continuing to work very hard through all the concerns with COVID. We do have one region that is basically closed due to local orders. Otherwise all CDCs are operating.

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Kim Bock, Part B/619 Coordinator- I'll just mention the biggest news is the statewide monitor that WDE is doing for all regions. They are expecting to be finished at the end of the month and we will hear results next month.

Kelli Pedersen- daughter is in third grade and doing well. I don't really have any updates at this time although I did hear an interesting idea about potential future cost savings where WDE could possibly get software and provide it uniformly across all districts in the state as well as early intervention costs and then it would be uniform for IEPs.

Mary Kugler, Head Start Representative- work with WY Child and Family, oversees services in 8 counties in WY. All of Head start- second year of WISER IDs and working with WDE in trying to continue to strengthen that process. Programs that provide disability services have been in this process longer than Head Start. There are some things to figure out. Other than that, we continue to try to muddle through COVID and work through that. Some families are still reluctant to put children in classrooms. We have hired special sanitizers in addition to the maintenance crew. We are providing some virtual services. So far so good that Head Starts have been able to continue regardless of COVID.

Mavis Earnshaw, Policy and Planning Advisor, WY Dept of Insurance- mostly we have been focusing on COVID vaccines and telehealth. We had a virtual insurance meeting and a working group was set up to monitor best practices with the Dept of Labor related to MH and addiction equity. Expanding guidelines and mostly trying to limit exclusion of services and increase pressure on insurance companies to cover applied behavior analysis.

Shawna Pena, Rural and Frontier Health, Public Health- working on some mental health issues in a couple of different counties. We have an intern who will be working on school based health clinics. We will also make sure that mental health is addressed. The Community Services block grant has some COVID funds attached to it. We are waiting for the feds to give us our money to work with families affected by COVID with things like paying rent, job coaching etc.

Wendy Gamble, Converse County schools, transition coordinator- basically we are just trying to work with EC providers virtually. We go to about two or three of the providers and masks are worn and social distancing is followed. We are trying to work on a process put in place for KG transition now that the date has changed from 9/15 to 8/1. There has been the expectation that we will find some sort of assessment for incoming kindergartners that have a DOB between those dates.

Wendy Warren, ECHO Coordinator ECHO and ED networks are up and running. Look on our website for updates. We have a group for anyone interested in providing virtual services. Second meeting is tomorrow, Wed afternoon from 4-5 pm once per month. Let Wendy know if you want to attend. Received telehealth mini grant to purchase technology for families to use telehealth. Could purchase cameras, mics, devices, etc. We are also working on developmental monitoring. Have created an ECHO network with other partners related to how to get parents more engaged.



Standing Updates Provided by Judy Juengel, Contracts and Data Specialist

We completed the Part C amendments in November and December.

We completed Part B 459 report to WDE on December 13th. This is a snapshot of the services kids are receiving at the beginning of December.

I assisted Christine with APR data.

I need to work on a couple of amendments for the EHDI contracts, work on the new Welligent contract for July 1st, and in February we will start drafting the July 1 contracts. We can draft the contract language prior to receiving our budget and per child amounts.

December 1 Child Count Discussion

This is the second year of using Welligent for the count. The count itself went very smoothly, meaning the data that we pulled was verified by the regions with only a couple of discrepancies which were resolved quickly. We know the regions worked very hard for several months preparing files for the count.

EIEP reviewed files in the month of November in preparation for the count. We are reviewing forms and data to ensure everything is complete.

Overall, only two regions saw an increase in their count; the other fourteen regions saw a decrease. Overall count was down by 256- Part B was down by 190 kids and Part C was down by 66.

Heather Babbitt, Deputy Administrator- Unit Update

I will talk a little bit more about child count. I will build a little bit on what Jen Davis touched on- some CDCs approached us about using last year's count. We did a lot of back and forth discussion about whether or not we thought we could do that. AS a division we did not have authority to use last year's count. What we got was a note in the budget asking the leg to consider using last year's count. We are anxiously awaiting the discussion on what count to use.

Christine Demers, Part C Coordinator

I sent out the APR draft. We have 10 indicators that we are reporting on. When we go to put the numbers in, out of the 10 we have met 5 of the targets and there was no slippage. That leaves us 5 targets that we did not meet. One indicator three we should discuss is child outcome measurement. We use the BDI assessment at the beginning of services and when they exit and compare scores. We measure growth by doing this. This has been impacted by COVID and child outcomes have been significantly affected. Our performance has reduced in child outcomes due to the fact that some kids did not receive evaluations due to COVID. Everyone is now using BDI at entry and exit. We have changed some of the performance numbers based on our performance. The transition indicator looks better now.

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Concern with BDI- in the outcomes it is going to be hard to meet outcomes because BDI scoring is difficult- if we do BDI at age three, then when they exit age four for example, they have to gain all skills for a four year old so it is difficult to show progress. BDI expects so much growth over one year and it's not the same intake and exit test. Seems like we may be expecting way too much growth for kids with special needs. To show growth shouldn't we be using the same questions at entry and exit?

We really set high targets and we are going to take another look at that. We will re-do the targets based on the BDI- the targets are based on the old child outcomes process. We will discuss with contractors and stakeholders and will work on it.

As far as the APR we did really well on the parent survey. Will be working on SPP and SSIP and will be re-doing everything and start from scratch.

What is the fallout when there is a significant decrease? Some indicators require 100% compliance and OSEP could withhold the grant. Ind 3 is a performance indicator so they do not expect 100% compliance. I really don't know what consequences will be as of yet. A lot of states are having difficulty in this indicator because of COVID. We are even more affected being a BDI state. There could be several reasons why we didn't perform well. Our pool of results to base performance on was decreased. Part C kids may not be faring well by virtual delivery of services.

Motion to approve minutes:

Motion to approve minutes by Alisha Rone

Mary seconded. Motion passed.

As part of EC grant- the Governance Task Force looked at alignment of EC programming. As a result there is a recommendation to realign EC programming to move everyone to two agencies. There has been a bill filed for this session. HB 63- can view on the legislature's website. Aims to realign programs by function from four agencies to two agencies. For this council and EIEP what this means is moving both Parts B/C to WDE. Also proposed to go to WDE is HS Collaboration Office. Recommended To move to DFS are Home Visiting and WY Quality Counts. What this bill does is it is sponsored by JEC. Move would be effective July 2022. Work together with CDCs and other stakeholders to develop an action plan and take into consideration the work that they do in centers and the impact of the move. All staff, property, equipment, would move to WDE. Also during the year we would report to JEC about progress. This is an ongoing discussion that has been going on for a long time. Committee meetings start next week. The bill has to go through a legislative process. The bill does ask for reports from WDE on number of complaints filed regarding EC and # of kids ID'd with disability in KG. May be audited by OSEP for Part C. We want to focus on kids through this. There were no questions. Alisha noted that CDC's are very discouraged about the

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process of developing this bill. She mentioned concerns about the discussion about under identifying children. She feels that the route that has been taken lacks integrity. CDS of Wyoming plans to oppose the bill. They are hoping for amendments that will protect CDC's.

Heather reported on the budget situation. We had Step 1 reductions. Step 2 reductions affected the regional programs. The DOH has a lot of general fund money, so this division is tasked with greater cuts. The reductions were submitted and authorized by the Governor. For Part C it was a little over 4 million dollars in cuts. Christine and Kathy reached out to OSEP regarding the maintenance of effort because of the cuts. At this time we are unsure of what will happen as a result of this. We are paying the CDC's less so they suggested that we look for MOE in several ways to help meet this maintenance. OSEP is committed to helping us work through this. Heather is feeling like other states are potentially struggling as well. The budget hearing with joint appropriations was held. OSEP wants Wyoming Part C to stay active so we will see what happens. A survey was sent out to regions to determine additional funding sources that can be used as part of the maintenance efforts. This is a unique situation so we just don't know what will happen. Heather added that what is at stake is the federal dollars, not the entire program. Alisha asked if the state had additional dollars to make up this difference, would we be ok. Heather mentioned that it has to be a sustainable funding source. Heather reminded the group that we are not the only state that will be affected by the COVID crisis. Information has been provided to the directors office and legislature.

The idea to table committee discussion was brought up. The group agreed with this.

Motion to adjourn the meeting:

Mary Kugler moved to adjourn and Alisha Rone seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

Tentative Next Meetings:

April 6, 2021

July 6, 2021