

Early Intervention Council



Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting	Wyoming Early Intervention Council	Date	April 6, 2021	
Chair/Facilitator	Wendy Warren	Time	1:00PM	
Location	Google Meet	Scribe	Judy Juengel	
Members In Attendance	Last	First	From	Represents
	Beastrom	Jamie	Region 3	Provider
	Bush	James	Wyoming Department of Health (WDH)	State Medicaid Director
	Davis	Jen	Governor's Office	Health Advisor
	Earnshaw	Mavis	Wyoming Dept. of Insurance	Health Policy analyst
	Johnson	Jamin	Public Health	Child Health
	Kugler	Mary	Wyoming Child & Family Development, Inc.	Head Start Agency
	Pedersen	Kelli	Parent Rep	Parent Rep
	Rone	Alisha	CDC Casper	CDS/Providers
	Serelson	Sara	Wyoming Children's Trust Fund (WCTF)	WCTF
	Warren	Wendy	Wyoming Institute of Disabilities (WIND)	Personnel Preparation

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Members Absent	Shannon Cranmore, Senator Wasserburger, Wendy Gamble, Debra Hibbard, Helena Wagner, Shawna Pena, Kathy Escobedo
Guests	Christine Demers, Judy Juengel, Kim Bock, Amy Reyes

Discussion Items

April 6, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM by Wendy Warren, Wyoming (WY) Early Intervention Council (EIC) Chair.

Reading of the mission by Christine Demers

Reading of the charter by Alisha Rone

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

Amy Reyes, Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) Early Learning Specialist- we are in same position with legislature wrapping up and trying to get our minds around with everything that appended. Working on WISER ID for kids in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. We are in the process of implementing sub grants at district level. Sub grants have rolled out. We are busy working on district literacy plans. I've been spending time on early care grant and helping with that process. Received ready for kindergarten grant to provide assistance to families regarding family engagement and send out info on activities. That was a small grant that we got a week and a half ago now. Have been working with kindergarten transition committee. Still haven't heard how recovery act will affect TANF yet.

Alisha Rone, Child Development Center (CDC) Director, Child Development Services of Wyoming (CDS) President- at the end of a grant that WCTF put out. Thank you for that and for the pinwheels. Heavily involved in legislation with House Bill 63 (HB0063) and moving us to WDE. That took a lot of time and am glad that is done with. Legislature did accept supplemental budget so that we could use our child counts from 2019. It is a huge relief that was passed. We are exiting about 170 kids to kindergarten this fall. We are very busy with exit Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI).s. We have annual event on May 1st- our A La Carte- have 450 people in attendance.

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Christine Demers, Part C Coordinator- will provide updates later.

Dr. James Bush, Medical Director- WY Medicaid Director for WDH- Wyoming Medical Society asked me to write an article on blood screening and why it's important at 12 and 24 months for all Medicaid kids. 90% Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) compliance- these people will present to others who are not doing well. With the American Rescue Plan (ARP) we have the opportunity to extend Medicaid coverage to 1 year post partum. We weren't allowed to drop Medicaid coverage during the Public Health Emergency. Normally, mothers would have lost Medicaid coverage at day 61. Hope to present to governor's office and legislature to extend Medicaid coverage to 12 months.

Jamin Johnson, Public Health, Child Health Program Manager- work at WDH in Maternal and Child Health- children with special healthcare needs- in our unit we are doing all sorts of things to work towards completion of 5 year priorities under federal block grant. Looking at conducting statewide needs assessment. Identify barriers to a well-functioning system for children with healthcare needs. Will be reaching out to this group for support and to make sure the group's voices, knowledge and experience are heard.

Jamie Beastron, R3 Family Service Coordinator (FSC). FSC for Region 3 area serving Crook and Weston County where it's currently snowing. We don't have anything to report. Getting ready for transitions and gearing towards summer.

Jen Davis, Senior Policy Advisor, Governor's Office- I don't have a lot of information right now. Legislative session ends tomorrow. Fairly quiet in legislature right now. Working in office with Preschool Development Grant (PDG) and assisting Align and Wyoming Kids First. Focus is looking at data in the early childhood system and looking at how we can find alignment across stakeholders.

Kim Bock, Part B/619 Coordinator- I don't have anything to report right now. Will update later in agenda.

Kelli Pedersen, Parent- daughter was in services in the past. Question- with blood screening? Are there kits available for pregnant women to test water?

Answer: Water testing is beyond the scope of Medicaid, this is something the Environmental Protection Agency does. Communities of a certain size are required to test water.

Mary Kugler, Head Start Representative- work with WY Child and Family. WY Head Start Association- all programs are busy with spring enrollment.

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Looking at partners at McKinney- Vento for children in Foster Care.

Looking at developmental disabilities- most in need of support services.

Reminder- centers are doing an incredible job with these families- refer to Head Start (HS) when appropriate.

Looking at WISER ID process. HS has been selected to assign WISER IDs with purpose of exchanging info, looking at outcomes, adjusting teaching practices. There are differences in communities and we are looking at strategic plan over next 5 years. Seeing a need of mental health supports for our families, children, and staff. Working with community partners to make sure people have access to needed services.

Mavis Earnshaw, Policy and Planning Advisor, WY Dept of Insurance- currently trying to get a handle on no surprises billing act, American Rescue Plan and changes coming out of Washington. Just got new info on consolidated appropriations act. Make sure companies are aware of rules for major medical policies. Learning new rules at this time.

Wendy Warren, Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) Coordinator- Telehealth mini grant that we have available for families- we were able to provide devices. Seems the real need is data so our great team at WIND is not only devices and how to support families at telehealth appointments. We would like to have families apply it would just be for additional tools to use.

Sara Serelson- WY Children's Trust Fund Executive Director. Got forwarded invite about 10 min ago. Nice to meet those who I haven't previously worked with. Rounding up 30 parent cafe meetings across the state. We have been doing mandatory supporter training which is a combination of mandatory reporting and protective factors. Thanks for letting me join.

Standing Updates Provided by Judy Juengel, Contracts and Data Specialist

The Part B and C contracts are drafted and in the approval process. We are on track to have those complete by June 30th. We are working on some Request for Proposals (RFPs) for our professional services contracts.

Call for additions to agenda- none.

Review of minutes

Mary moves to accept the minutes as presented.

Alisha seconded.



Motion passes.

Public Comment- None.

New Business

Part C Application Discussion- Christine Demers, Part C Coordinator

We have published the application on our website. Here is the link:

<https://health.wyo.gov/behavioralhealth/early-intervention-education-program-eiep/infant-and-toddler-part-c-information/>

We had to mark that we were not meeting the assurance for Maintenance of Effort (MOE) (non-supplanting). We are not maintaining the level of funding from the previous year that we knew we met the funding. Kathy has more details in her updates. Part C reductions were one of the reductions proposed. We reduced funding by 2.1 million for this fiscal year. By reducing that amount, we reduced funding so we did not meet MOE. Currently working with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to see if there is a way for us to meet MOE by looking at local public funding. Have asked CDCs to give us local funding from tax revenue, county government, etc. to see if we can make up the shortfall. We are still looking into this. A lot of implications if we do not continue in the federal program. This body would be very much involved and at this time we have not reached a decision. We are still working on seeing if we can meet it without restoring funding through the legislature. We cannot say without a doubt that we are meeting MOE. In the future I think we need to discuss. What we have been told is that if we don't accept federal funds for next year, that doesn't mean we won't service birth through age two population. We would continue to serve this population with state funds but we don't know what that would look like. Regions have been made aware of current funding status. If that ends up not being the case we anticipate being able to serve the population through these contracts. Hopefully down the road we could re-enter the federal program but it would be at a much lower MOE level. There are a lot of "ifs" at this point and things we didn't know. There are some good funding sources in centers for local public funds but we are still looking into that. We will continue to inform EIC.

Kathy's updates- see document provided for EIEP updates.

HB0063 Discussion on Next Steps- Christine Demers

Testimony from March 8th

Watch the video

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Proposal was amended. Instead of moving to WDE move to Department of Family Services (DFS) instead. Thought was it would benefit the centers better as the centers already work with DFS. Wanted you to see the testimony. Reason we wanted you to see testimony is it was stated that we were not serving children at the level that we should. We should look deeper into that to see if we can either validate and say we are or are not serving kids at the same level as the school districts and make steps towards improving services to children who are deaf/hard of hearing. This was taken seriously as an action point of something we should look into. Want the council's feedback on that and if you feel the same way regarding these services to children.

Alisha- doesn't understand where that comment came from. From report cards we know improvements need to be made. OSEP ranks WY as #1 in serving children 3-5 years old. I don't feel her comment is merited.

Focus on low incidence population of hearing loss, vision impairment. We want to make sure we are the best we can be.

At one point we did talk about the lack of Teachers of the Deaf (TODs) around the state in EIC. No center needs a full time TOD. Could we contract with schools to serve these preschool children? Are there other TODs willing to travel? Cost is high and we don't have funding for centers to provide this position full time. For our kids who are blind we do contract with OM specialist. Maybe we can look at these solutions not per center but more of statewide support so we have identified sources for these services. Collaborate to share contracts for these people to work in the centers. We are addressing the issue and are including the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program to help with a solution and come up with a plan. One other thing council could take on is we have a huge shortage of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP)s. Speech is the number one service kids need and across the board we need SLPs in the centers.

Alisha- This bill harmed the reputation of the centers and the Early Intervention and Education Program (EIEP). False statements were made and we need to promote the good things the centers are doing and thousands of developmental screenings that are offered. We have to look at the situation objectively but we also need to look at what we can improve and make sure correct and accurate information is what gets out. Part C is 5th in nation as far as identifying kids on Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP)s verses population. We identify close to 5% of kids. This is double what the average is nationally which is 2%. We are competing with states who have universal preschool. We have a small population in a large state so we do have a strong infrastructure. We have done well delivering services after the IFSP is implemented. It's hard to measure quality but the parent surveys reflect on that. The grant was all of early childhood and how we can improve.



When we think about reputation that have been tarnished, it would be in our best interest as providers and collaborators that we try to figure out how to repair relationships as we move forward. We are working on common goal of providing quality early childhood services.

When the bill didn't go through committee Alisha offered for WDH and WDE to have some crucial conversations as to what took place. I never heard back from WDE and maybe the council should be the one to initiate the conversations on how to move forward. The goal of the task force was to improve EC systems and we need to keep that goal in mind. We want to help facilitate this council's involvement. We want to communicate correctly and use the data.

Update from Matt Petry, WDH Senior Administrator- the work in early childhood is going to continue. Heather Babbitt moved on to the Department of Corrections.

Act Early Grant Update- Wendy Warren

Kicked off Act Early network in collaboration with Ohio and Virginia. This opportunity came up as a way of looking at how to do that. Looking at four phases of family engagement. We kicked off and we are hosting third session on Friday. Have some questions about cultural considerations. These occur every other Friday from 1-2:30pm. So far have had good representation from Wyoming. The Act Early initiative provides collaboration so children with autism and other disabilities can get services they need. We finally got some printed materials in the office. We have all of the baby books in English and Spanish. Milestone tracker app has been updated and is available.

Nominations for EIC Officers

Kelli Pedersen is current vice chair and will move to chairperson.

Nominations for Vice Chair

Kelli nominates Alisha Rone for Vice Chair. Motion seconded by Jamin Johnson. Alisha accepts the nomination.

Motion passes.

Motion to adjourn by Alisha
Seconded by Amy Reyes.

Meeting adjourned at 2:35 PM.

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Tentative Next Meetings:

July 6, 2021