

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission
April 21-22, 2009 Retreat
Minutes

Members Present: Evelyn Bass, Eleanor Coleman, Marilyn Chambers, Dee Cox, Janice Dancer, Missy Duke, Nickie Hammontree, Barbara Gilkey, Debbie Malone, Debbie Mays, Richard Nugent, Paulette Smith, Jody Veit-Edrington, Suellen Ward

Members Absent: Bruce Cohen, Amy Denton, Jeff Maneth

I. Call to Order/reading of Mission Statement

The April 2009 meeting of the AECC was called to order at 10:00 am by Barbara Gilkey, Chair. A quorum of members was present.

II. Approval of minutes

Minutes from the October 2008 meeting were reviewed and approved. Due to weather, the January meeting was cancelled.

III. New Business

Presentation by Nancy VonBargen, NCCIC (see attached) from a national perspective on early care and education.

Director's Report

Tonya Russell, Director DCCECE reviewed the "Building for the Future of Arkansas Children" a 5 year strategic plan developed in 2002. She acknowledged that most of the goals had been met. Ann Patterson, Head Start Collaboration Office and Division Staff shared state perspectives.

Eva Carter and Nancy VonBargen led commissioner and Division staff through an activity to acknowledge both individual and collective roles.

The following is a summary of "Take Aways" from Day One:

- "The knowledge, skills and compassion of members of the group. This is what makes Arkansas even greater in years to come. "
- "Developing a state system that meets the needs of all families from birth to school age. "
- "Energy and commitment of staff and commission members to enhance quality services for Arkansas children and families. "
- "Arkansas is striving everyday to offer the best quality childcare services to children. It is amazing what this small state has done already. I am honored to be part of this group. "

- “The children of this state are the number one concern of everyone here today. “
- “Expanded roles of the Commission provide opportunity for strategic planning to achieve positive outcomes for early care and education (young children) in Arkansas. “
- “When people with diverse backgrounds and views work together, they can accomplish great things! “
- “Multiple methods, priorities and skill sets but always a passion for children. “
- “Develop the program/curriculum necessary for teachers to be able to obtain 0-3 credential. “
- “We all come from the same place—a love and passion for children and families, but with diverse experiences, backgrounds and talents we can do so much for children and families in our state. I am looking forward to this being a “working” commission. “
- “We all care about what is best for children. “
- “Expanding and promoting early childhood components in the community.“
- “I am not alone in my efforts to promote early childhood as a profession and a way of life for children in the state.”

Eva Carter led Commissioners through an abbreviated strategic planning process. (see attached)

Adjournment of Day One.

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Day Two:

Eva Carter and Nancy VonBargen facilitated Commissioners and staff in action planning and sustainability self assessment (see attached).

The following goals were established:

- To increase the number of infants and toddlers served in quality, licensed centers annually.
- To increase annually parental involvement in the child’s education through research-based models and programs to enhance child outcomes and success in school.
- State policies should create an integrated system of professional development uniting the early childhood sectors- child care; HS; pre-k; public schools; early intervention and special education services. (Adopted from Workforce Designs NAEYC)

- To support implementation of QRIS.
- Strengthen and expand partnerships with other state agencies and organizations for connected action.

The next AECC meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2009.

IV. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by _____ and seconded by _____.