

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission
April 17, 2018
10:00am
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Deborah (Debbie) Mayes, Ryan Clayborn, Jody Veit-Edrington, Kim Whitman, Talicia Richardson, Lindsey Jones

Members Absent: Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price, Dr. Kathy Collins

I. Call to Order

Jody Veit-Edrington (Substitute Chair) called the AECC Commissioners' Meeting to order on April 17, 2018 at 10:06 a.m. Jody read the AECC's mission statement.

II. Approval of Minutes from October 2017

Jody Veit-Edrington asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 17, 2017 meeting. A motion was made by Debbie Mays and seconded by Ryan Clayborn. The motion carried.

III. Old Business

1. DCCECE Commissioner Report:

Tonya Williams provided a written report of the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission goals. Tonya stated the division would continue to update the commission on the goals with a written report at each meeting. Tonya shared information on the 2.37 billion dollars in funds added to the Child Care Development Block Grant. An estimate of 28-30 million dollars will be awarded to Arkansas.

Debbie Mays requested that the DCCECE team focus on child care homes in the Child Care Development Fund State Plan.

2. DCCECE Staff Update:

Tonya Williams announced the retirement of Arlene Rose in March 2018. Tonya also introduced Ashelyn Abney, Assistant Director of Operations and Program Support. Ashelyn has a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction and holds several certifications/licenses including Early Childhood Education – PreK-4, ESL, Special Education in K-12, and Building Administrator. Additionally, she brings over 9 years of experience serving as a supervisor in our Licensing and Accreditation Unit, as well as over 13 years serving in an elementary school as a teacher and principal in Texas. Most recently, Ashelyn has worked for the division as an Education and Instruction Specialist in our Program and Professional Development Unit.

Ashelyn introduced Ted Beck, the Early Head Start Education Program Manager. Ted has been working in the field of education for over 30 years, serving as a classroom teacher, principal, as well as working more recently as a specialist for the Arkansas Department of Education. Ted has a Master's degree in Education and Educational Leadership and is a certified Preschool director. Ashelyn also introduced Jaesha Quarrels, the Early Head Start Program Administrator. Jaesha has a Master's degree in Early Childhood. She has worked in a variety of fields including as a Division of Children and Family Services caseworker, served as a Head Start lead teacher and a director at a child care center. Most recently, Jaesha worked for a center serving the developmentally disabled and worked on contract as a Federal Head Start Reviewer.

3. Better Beginnings Update:

Vicki Mathews presented documents pertaining to Goal #4, which included maps of Arkansas showing the number of Better Beginnings facilities by level and by county. Vicki shared information pertaining to Goal 1, which provides the infant and toddler capacities by quality level and participation by license type.

Vicki provided an update on Better Beginnings data (March 2017 – March 2018):

- 200 new providers in Better Beginnings
- 23 providers moved from level 1 to level 2
- 17 providers moved from level 2 to level 3

4. ABC Teacher Training & Credential, ABC Innovation Grant:

Mary Kaye McKinney presented the following information on the Arkansas Better Chance Innovation Grant. During the 2017 Legislative Session, Governor Hutchinson committed to an additional \$3 million a year to improve the quality in the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program. The funding was targeted to include improving and rewarding teacher quality and encourage and enhance innovation. A map was provided to show the locations of the grant recipients.

- \$2,540,000 or 85% of the funding to reward the ABC programs for teaching staff who are qualified in early childhood education and for assisting teachers
- \$102,500 or 3% of the funding to assist with teaching staff to obtain required certification and/or credentials
- \$357,500 or 12% of the funding to assist programs with the implementation of competitive innovation grant in the areas of Social/ Emotional, STEM-Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, Outdoor Eco-friendly Learning Environment (Natural Playground) and/ or Literacy

5. Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership Grant Board:

Zynda Patton provided a presentation on Head Start Program Governance including the governing body/tribal council, policy council/committee and management staff. Zynda provided a handout with the Head Start management systems leadership and governance

wheel and a handout with process on reporting.

IV. New Business

1. AR Outstanding Professional of the Year Award:

Paige Cox provided a hand out with the history of the award, the criteria the nominees must meet and the next steps for the award recipient.

Julie Barber was selected as the AR Outstanding Professional of the Year. Julie works as an early childhood special education teacher at Helping Hand Learning Center in North Little Rock serving children from birth through five years old. In her role, Julie supervises and mentors eight teachers. In addition, she is a STAR coach for her facility and is responsible for assisting with curriculum planning and due process for children within the program.

Julie is well respected by her colleagues. They say that Julie has “led them to flourish, she is trusted, she is spunky” and that “she ensures all children regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or academic skill are treated equally and fairly.” They appreciate that “she is innovative, creative and makes children and adults laugh and feel good with her sense of caring.”

Julie is an active member and volunteer within several professional organizations whose goals are to advocate on behalf of young children. These include: Arkansas Early Childhood Association, Southern Early Childhood Association, Autism Speaks volunteer, Special Olympics Young Athlete Coach, Alpha Sigma Alpha Advisor and March of Dimes volunteer.

2. Head Start State Collaboration Office/Arkansas Head Start Association:

Jackie Govan provided a hand out with updates/information on the following topics.

- Report Submitted
- Homelessness in Arkansas
- School Readiness
- Arkansas Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP)
- Children & Adolescent Services Program (CASSP)
- Equity Leaders Action Network (ELAN) Project
- Arkansas Home Visiting Network (HVN)
- Fatherhood Initiative
- Professional Development in Arkansas- Professional Development Registry (PDR)
- Family Engagement Guide, Self-Assessment and Framework
- Family and Community Engagement
- AR Family Engagement Peer Learning
- Welcome the Children
- Arkansas Court Team
- Grade-Level Reading Campaign
- Arkansas K-2 Assessment

- Arkansas Oral Health Coalition
- Arkansas Mission of Mercy
- Arkansas Head Start Association- Bi-Monthly Meeting
- Arkansas Institute Activities/Board Involvement (Arkansas Head Start Association)
- State Health Advisory Network
- Family Service Credential
- Region VI-Arkansas Institute

3. Infant/Toddler Certificate:

Brandy Ishmon presented information on the Infant Toddler Certificate. The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE) is offering an Infant Toddler Certificate to support practitioners in acquiring skills and knowledge as part of a career pathway in the field of Infant and Toddler care. The Infant Toddler Certificate contains three levels of training: foundation, intermediate, and advanced, for each practitioner to complete. Upon completion of all three levels, practitioners can expect to build their professional competencies in supporting a young child’s social-emotional, cognitive, language, and literacy development. The Infant Toddler Certificate provides a route to higher education for the preparation of all infant toddler teachers. This certificate will also prepare its recipients to educate children with special needs. This certification cannot be used to replace the CDA but provides an excellent way for Provider to ensure that teachers are enrolled and attending training that will support them in their current infant toddler teaching positions.

4. Arkansas Early Childhood Association (AECA):

Debbie Mays provided a presentation with information about the Arkansas Early Childhood Association. Debbie is the president of the Arkansas Early Childhood Association.

V. Announcements/Action Items

Action Item- Create a Arkansas Better Chance/Early Childhood Data Workgroup across the state to focus on data/slots.

VI. Adjournment

Jody Veit-Edrington asked for a motion to adjourn. Ryan Clayborn made a motion to adjourn. Debbie Mays seconded the motion. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, July 17, 2018. The location is 700 Main Street, Conference Room A & B.