

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission

April 17, 2012

10:00 am

Minutes

Members Present: Amy Denton, Martha McAnally, Evelyn Bass, Jackie Dedman, Barbara Gilkey, Patricia Lucas, Debbie Malone, Kim Qualls, Dr. Tracy Tucker, Jody Veit-Edrington, Dr. Haley Vo and Dr. Joseph R (Bob) West.

Members Absent: Shirley Pulliam, Martha Billingsley, Missy Duke, Janice Dancer, Marilyn Chambers, Rod Duckworth, Diane Green, Gene Gregory, Nickie Hammontree, Jeff Maneth, and Dr. Chad Rodgers.

I. Call to Order/Reading of Mission Statement

Barbara Gilkey, Chair, called the April 2012 meeting of the AECC to order at 10:10 am. A quorum of members was present. Dr. Bob West read the mission statement. Barbara Gilkey encouraged everyone to focus on the goals. Barbara Gilkey introduced Jeanette Perdue with AR Children's Hospital and she welcomed everyone to the meeting. Tonya Russell stated that the Division is in the process of hiring someone to oversee professional development, specifically in line with Goal 3.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the January 2012 meeting were reviewed. Jody Veit-Edrington made a motion to accept the minutes. Debbie Malone seconded the motion. The motion carried.

III. Old Business

Arkansas Children's Week (ACW) Reminder – April 22-28, 2012

-Join Us Under the Storytelling Tree!

Tonya Russell reminded everyone about this week. She encouraged members to volunteer to possibly read a book at an early childhood education facility. She encouraged members to look at the ACW bulletin board located by the DCCECE office in the DPS building. She also mentioned that several ACW grants had been awarded.

2012 Outstanding Early Childhood Professional/Consideration and Approval

-Carol Chase, Bernita Glass, Patty Malone, Natasha Crosby

Tonya Russell referred members to the handout describing each of the four chosen Outstanding Early Childhood Professionals. Barbara Gilkey asked for a motion to approve the individuals selected. Debbie Malone

made a motion to approve and Kim Qualls seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Teacher Licensure Statement

The committee composed a letter from the AECC with the recommendation of keeping the P-4 licensure. They asked for approval to send the letter to the Arkansas Department of Education. Jody Veit-Edrington made a motion to approve the letter and Evelyn Bass seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Tonya Russell stated that two meetings were scheduled regarding teacher licensure in April and May with the Department of Education.

IV. New Business

ECE Alignment

Tonya Russell is on the Guiding Coalition committee to assist with implementation of Common Core. She presented at a fall meeting the history of the development of the ECE Frameworks and that they were based on the whole child. Common Core addresses only math and language arts.

Jackie Dedman presented everyone with a handout on a format for a statewide early childhood system and a checklist for an early childhood performance assessment. Jackie asked that a committee be formed to review all early childhood regulations in the state in order to build a quality early childhood system that would focus on aligning early childhood programs {ABC, Head Start, HIPPIY, Voucher, DDTCS,} and identifying any loopholes. The Arkansas Better Beginnings QRIS would be a part of this system. The committee would be charged with developing a plan to address these loopholes and creating a positive system that would build quality for all children in Arkansas. The committee would also research and review early childhood ongoing performance assessments that would be used with any curriculum for ALL early childhood programs. This assessment would be used to collect and analyze data on all pre-K children in order to plan instruction, improve intervention, and follow the progress of groups of children in the state as they transition into the public school (School Readiness). A task force was created to begin the work for these two tasks. Members of the task force include: Pat Lucas, Amy Denton, Evelyn Bass, Jackie Dedman, Sarah Argue, and Paige Cox. Tonya Russell asked that the ADE and other outside professionals be included on the task force as well.

Tonya asked to include an ADE representative and outside professionals as well and have them added as needed.

ABC Rules and Regulations Update

Paige Cox distributed a copy of the memorandum sent to ABC programs regarding separation of church and state along with a copy of the proposed new rules. Cox explained that an organization requested information about two ABC facilities owned by state legislators. The organization complained that state funds were being used for religious purposes. This complaint led to the development of new proposed ABC rules that were drafted by attorneys from ADE and DHS. Cox explained that she had taken the rules before the State Board of Education who approved them to be distributed for public comment. Before the proposed rules become final, they have to be approved again by the State Board of Education and taken before a legislative rules committee for review. Cox said she wanted to make the Commission aware of the process. Cox also informed the Commission that ABC planned to make additional revisions to the ABC rules during the next year.

Debbie Malone asked where faith based providers fall. Paige stated that they would not be excluded and each individual action would be looked at by our attorneys.

Tonya Russell noted that we had some ABC money available through reallocation of slots. The money will be used in the most needed areas and the money kept in the same areas. There is an RFP on the website designating the geographic areas. The goal is to keep the ABC slots within the school district area they are currently assigned.

Arkansas Research Center

-Early Childhood Education Project

Sarah Argue gave a presentation from the AR Research Center. It is designed to be a part of a statewide longitudinal process. The achievement gap is not just testing but a social gap also. Poverty is a very serious problem and has the most impact on children's learning. Sarah presented several charts showing the impact of sickness and poverty on children's education success.

IV. Other Business

- Tonya Russell asked Amy Denton for an update on the success of the program in her facility. Amy stated it was going very well and that within six (6) weeks a lot of behavior issues had subsided. The staff have received a lot of training and learned that more center based time helps.

They are trying to eliminate incorrect Mental Health diagnosis for many children.

- Barbara Gilkey mentioned that Rita Pearson did a presentation on poverty and that it was very good.
- Tonya Russell stated there was a new grant for foster care and early childhood education that states can apply and improve early childhood quality. She continues to look for new grants for innovation.
- Tonya Russell proposed for October's meeting to have a 1 ½ day planning meeting. She wants everyone to look at the goals and see where we are and where we are headed.
- Tonya stated that we would get a list of contracts and the professional development offered trainings and begin having them come to present at the meetings.

VI. Next Meeting

-July 17, 2012

VII. Request for Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned.