

## Arkansas Early Childhood Commission

July 19, 2016

10:00am

### Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Ava Coleman, Debbie Mays, Dr. Charisse Childers (proxy-Marna Farris), Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price, Dr. Matthew Nix, Jackie Govan, Jody Veit-Edrington, Kim Whitman, Michelle Barnes, Ryan Clayborn, Shirley Pulliam (proxy-Lula Woodall), Talicia Richardson (proxy-Belinda Washington)

Members Absent: Amy Denton, Debbie Tacket, Evelyn Bass, Gene Roebuck, Senator Caldwell, Stacy Smith

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#### **I. Call to Order**

Jody Veit-Edrington called the AECC Commissioners' Meeting to order on July 19, 2016 at 10:10 a.m. Jody read the AECC's mission statement and Arkansas Early Childhood Commission goals.

#### **II. Approval of Minutes from April 2016**

Jody Veit-Edrington asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 19, 2016 meeting. Glenda Ezell brought attention to two typos in the minutes for correction. A motion was made by Debbie Mays and seconded by Jackie Govan. The motion carried.

#### **III. Old Business**

##### 1. DCCECE Staff Updates:

Arlene Rose introduced Tracey Shine, the new Health and Nutrition Administrator. Tracey is a 13 year employee of the Department of Human Services. She has 15 years of experience in Social Services.

##### 2. Better Beginnings/QRIS Update (Goal #1, Goal #4):

Beverly Wright presented a handout related to goal #1 and goal #4. The handout pertaining to goal 1 provides information on the infant and toddler capacities by quality level and participation by license type.

Beverly Wright presented documents pertaining to goal #4, which included maps of Arkansas showing the number of Better Beginnings facilities by level and by county. The goal is to increase by 10% each year, the state has met this goal each year.

##### 3. CPR/First Aid Data:

Beverly Wright presented an update on the CPR/First Aid item. Licensing Specialists were instructed to discuss CPR/First Aid with each provider this trimester and begin monitoring for compliance. DCCECE developed a template that can be used to compose an Alternative Compliance request for providers having difficulty meeting the requirement for 50% of their current staff to have a

CPR/First Aid Certification. In addition, the specialist were instructed to determine if an Alternative Compliance is appropriate.

Beverly explained the definition of a “trimester” for the DCCECE licensing unit. A trimester is a four month period of licensing visits. The current trimester is May, June, July and August. This process started in the middle of the trimester and some of the licensing visits had already been completed. The work will continue on to the next trimester in September, October, November and December.

Tonya Williams and David Griffin stated that DCCECE has an extra help staff member who is available to conduct CPR/First Aid trainings.

Tonya Williams stated, the division has been given clarification on the new Federal Child Care Development Fund requirements for providers who accept child care subsidy vouchers. All direct care staff are required to be trained in CPR/First Aid.

Paige Cox stated that the Child Care Aware agencies should all be providing CPR/First Aid training. Paige will follow up to ensure this training is being provided across the state.

**ACTION ITEM:** David Griffin will present the CPR/First Aid updates to the Commission on October 18, 2016.

**ACTION ITEM:** Paige Cox will gather data and provide a resource list for CPR/First Aid options in the state.

4. Expulsion and Suspension/Behavior Help Launch Update:

Arlene Rose reported the Behavior Help Support system launched on July 1, 2016. The providers are actively reaching out for help. To date, DCCECE has received 8 requests for assistance. The Behavior Help Support team has staffed the process for each request and created referrals to Arkansas State University and UAMS Project Play. DCCECE offered 6 training sessions for Child Care Development Fund providers. DCCECE will post webinars for the Child Care Development Fund providers who were unable to attend the trainings.

5. Health and Nutrition Update:

Tracey Shine provided an update for the Health and Nutrition program. The Health and Nutrition program currently completed the eligibility processing for the Summer Feeding Summer Program (SFSP).

Health & Nutrition Programs	Submitted	Approved /Sites	Denied	Withdrew
Summer Feeding Summer Program	201	120	62	25
National School Lunch Program	50	processing		
At-Risk/Child & Adult Food Program	611	processing		

Currently the Health & Nutrition Unit is processing applications for the National School Lunch Program (NLSP) and At-Risk/Child & Adult Care Food program (CACFP). The review team is

conducting site and sponsors reviews on all three Health and Nutrition programs. The training unit is currently training sponsors for participation in the At-Risk/Child & Adult Food Program. CACFP will implement new meal standards that will be effective for all program participants on October 01, 2017.

6. Pre-K Summer Services:

Mary McKinney provided an update for Arkansas Better Chance and Child Care Development Fund Summer Services. The following are the statistics that were shared with the commissioners:

Summer Services	# of Agencies	ABC children
2015	141	5808 appx
2016	64	1219 appx

Mary McKinney shared details on the challenges in funding constraints for summer services in 2016. The Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) has previously funded Summer Services but the funds were not available this summer in 2016. Two different funding sources and systems were used to capture the data. Because of funding constraints, there was a discussion in DCCECE about the ability to provide summer services at all, knowing that the number of children served were going to be greatly reduced.

2016 Summer Services Questions:

- Why there were delays in confirmation of summer services?
  - CCDF Funding was not able to fund summer services at the past rate
  - Why? Increases to services to foster care families who child care assistance.
    - Better Beginnings--Increase rates of Level Three providers
  - New reauthorization act required one year authorization for each eligible family
  - Arkansas Better Chance had to assess the availability of funding and to ensure all payments were complete for the year prior to making commitment to additional funding.
    - Calculations of commitments had to be finalized in order to know how much funding was remaining in Arkansas Better Chance.
  - All Arkansas Better Chance requests or changes are required to go before the State Board to receive approval prior to any new funding being added to the programs interested in conducting summer services.
  - Arkansas Better Chance payments have to be approved internally and then processed by the Arkansas Department of Education Finance. Payments are handled at one time and errors can result in the delay of the payments being processed especially at the end of the fiscal year.

- How to Prevent Difficulties:
  - Frequent debriefing to determine availability of funding
  - Continue to improve the processes of handling all the facets of summer services when two different funding sources are involved.
  - A payment process has been developed so that the Arkansas Department of Education will process the request from DCCECE based on the information provided to the State Board and the total grant award for each program is clearly indicated.

Mary McKinney provided the Arkansas Better Chance Fast Facts document to the commissioners. The document included data for programs, total children, teacher qualifications, funding sources, etc.

7. Early Childhood Monitoring Work Group:

The idea of the work group is the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education Monitoring. The focus is on the efficiencies for our early education providers in the state and the DCCECE staff. Early Education providers receive several monitoring visits per year, the efficiencies surrounding monitoring across DCCECE will be the focus.

**ACTION ITEM:** Send Early Childhood Monitoring Work Group committee member recommendations to Sara Norwood.

8. Kellogg Grant:

Jackie Govan presented on the continued work with the State Department of Education on the Kindergarten Entry Screener. The established timelines were unable to be met due to changes in procurement processes, as a result, the public school kindergarten programs will use the QUALLS, Early Learning Inventory.

The Child Development Early Learning Standards and the Family Engagement Guide and Frameworks were both funded through the Kellogg Grant. Both items will be placed on the Professional Development Registry. As a result of the Family Engagement Initiative, the state now has resources for programs across the state through our lending libraries with Child Care Aware and the Head Start State Collaboration Office. There is also a system in place for Family Engagement professional development in rural areas of the state, with a partnership with Arkansas Educational Television Network.

9. Fatherhood Initiative/Statewide Fatherhood Mentoring Program:

Jackie Govan presented on the Fatherhood Initiative. The Fatherhood Initiative (FEEL) team will meet in August for the quarterly meeting and to make a decision on the statewide fatherhood mentoring program. The following are the two options:

- Work with incarcerated fathers who have less than 6 months to a year and have children ages birth to 8 years of age. This would include a partnership with workforce services to assist in finding the father a job when he is released from prison.

- Work with high school teen fathers who have young children in early education programs. This would include a partnership with workforce services to assist in finding the father a job upon graduation.

10. Early Head Start/Head Start Update:

Jackie Govan provided a Head Start update. The new Head Start Performance Standards will be released this fall, 2016. The Family Engagement mobile deliveries to Early Head Start, Head Start and some Arkansas Better Chance programs started last week. The monitoring protocol for Early Head Start/Head Start has changed again with emphasis on the 5 year grant period. There is a different protocol for each section: ERSEA, Fiscal Integrity, Leadership, Governance and Management, Environmental Health and Safety (HSKI), Comprehensive Services and School Readiness. Uniform guidance or super circular (2CRF Part 200) are the new federal fiscal regulations. Programs have a year to make these changes (2014-2015), therefore, now all programs have to be in compliance with these fiscal regulations. (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, Audit Requirements)

11. ELAN Project:

Jackie Govan presented the project proposal for the Equity Leaders Action Network (ELAN). The ELAN proposal consists of "Promoting Equity in AR's Early Childhood system: Supporting Effective Teachers Competencies in Working with African American Male Children." The state's proposal has been approved and the ELAN advisory council had its first meeting this month. The committee will be meeting monthly to complete the four outcomes and strategies. Some of the main activities that we have been approved to do within the 3 year period include: ELAN Survey, ELAN Equity Cafes, and Teacher Case Study.

**ACTION ITEM:** Jackie Govan will provide ELAN data to Commissioners.

#### **IV. New Business**

1. DHS Reorganization:

Tonya Williams presented that the Department of Human Services is currently being evaluated by many different entities and the Department of Human Services has a new director, Cindy Gillespie. The agency is reorganizing as a result of Phase I and will have shared services in the following areas: Finance, Information Technology, Procurement, Personnel, and Legal. The teams will now be more centralized with the agency. For example, Laura Webb will continue to work with the division but she will now report to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the agency.

2. AR Outstanding Early Childhood Professionals 2016:

Paige Cox provided the nominees and professional information for the AR Outstanding Early Childhood Professionals for 2016. The nominees are Quanisha Wooden, Susan Meek, and Hannah Hanna. A motion was made by Glenda Ezell to approve the nominees and seconded by Jackie Govan. The motion carried.

3. Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership/Early Head Start Expansion Grant:  
 Brandy Ishmon provided an update on the current Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership. Three grantees were awarded in Arkansas for a total of 376 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership slots. There are currently 20 Child Care Partnership sites.

Better Beginnings Quality Level	July 2015	June 2016
3	6	8
2	2	4
1	10	7 (1 pending for Level 2)
0	2	1 (facility licensed 5/23/16)
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

Brandy Ishmon presented on the progress of the Early Head Start Expansion Grant. A Funding Opportunity Announcement was released by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), June 23, 2016 for Early Head Start Expansion and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grants. The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education decided to write for the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant on a state level. The submission date is August 24, 2016.

4. State Plan Update/Implementation Plan:

Ivory Daniels presented an update on the State Plan and Implementation Plan. The following items have been approved conditionally pending the Arkansas State Plan implementation.

- Section 1.8.1 - Child Care Disaster Plan- Guidelines for continuing Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) assistance and child care services after a disaster (which may include provision of temporary child care and temporary operating standards for child care after a disaster.) Add to training requirements and implement professional development training as well as training staff on administrative procedures. Lock-down procedures will be added to requirements for New Director Orientation and Pre-Licensing Training.
- Section 2.3.1- Consumer Education Website- Provide annual aggregate information about the number of deaths, number of serious injuries as defined by the State/Territory and the number of incidences of substantiated child abuse in child care settings. The data system that is currently being built will have this capability. This system is anticipated to be operational within the next 12 to 18 months.
- Section 3.1.6 – Fluctuation of Earnings- A process for initial determination and redetermination take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings. DCCECE will calculate 90 days earnings for parents with irregular fluctuations in earnings.
- Section 5.1.6(a) – Health and Safety Requirements- The CCDBG Act of 2014 added a new provision specifying that states and territories must 1) establish health and safety

requirements for providers serving children receiving Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) assistance relating to matters including in the topics listed below and 2) have pre-service or orientation training requirements, appropriate to the provider setting, that address these health and safety topics. (658E(c)(2)(I)(i)) This requirement is applicable to all child care providers receiving Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) regardless of licensing status (licensed or license-exempt). DCCECE will provide ongoing training requirements appropriate to the provider settings that address each of the requirements relating to the required topic areas.

- Section 5.2.2(a) – Licensing Inspectors- It will have policies and practices that ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the state/territory are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, and are trained in all aspects of the State’s licensure requirements. We will require that all newly hired Licensing Specialists, as of July 1, 2016, will take the cultural diversity and language courses offered by DHS Human Resources Section.
- Section 5.3.1 Criminal Background Checks- Requirements, policies, and procedures in place to conduct criminal background checks for staff members of child care providers (other than relatives) that are licensed, regulated or registered under state/territory law or received Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funds. Projected start date: A law change cannot be requested earlier than January 2017 legislative which would be the implementation date of any laws passed during the 2017 legislative session.

Ivory Daniels provided an update on the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) waiting list. Currently, there are approximately 2,000 eligible children. The caseworkers are working with the families on the waiting list referring school aged children to Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) and Head Start. Also, making community resource referrals that meet the needs for the family.

5. School Readiness Teams:

Jackie Govan shared that Arkansas is working again to prepare for the 2016 School Readiness Summit, which will be held in Little Rock on November 8<sup>th</sup>, the location to be announced. The purpose of these teams is to focus on networking and collaboration, data systems, transitional alignment, and school readiness. The School Readiness State team has already identified some resources, materials, exhibitors, and are working on confirming speakers for the event. Arkansas applied for a grant with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to expand these teams to include early childhood programs that need this training and networking in addition to the programs who are already involved.

**V. Summary/Announcements**

- **ACTION ITEM**: David Griffin will present the CPR/First Aid updates to the Commission on October 18, 2016.
- **ACTION ITEM**: Paige Cox will gather data and provide a resource list for CPR/First Aid options in the state.

- **ACTION ITEM:** Send Early Childhood Monitoring Work Group committee member recommendations to Sara Norwood.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Jackie Govan will provide ELAN data to Commissioners.

**Future Meeting Agenda Items:**

- David Griffin to present the CPR/First Aid updates.
- Paige Cox to present CPR/First Aid resources available in the state.

**VI. Adjournment**

Jody Veit-Edrington asked for a motion to adjourn. Kim Whitman made a motion to adjourn. Jackie Govan seconded the motion. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

**VII. Next Meeting**

*The next meeting will be held Tuesday, October 18, 2016. The location is 700 Main Street, Conference Room A & B.*