



**Spark NH Vision:** All New Hampshire children and their families are healthy, learning, and thriving now and in the future.

**Spark NH Mission:** Provide leadership that promotes a comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable early childhood system that achieves positive outcomes for young children and families, investing in a solid future for the Granite State.

## Spark NH Council Meeting Summary

October 26, 2017

2 Delta Drive, Concord, NH

Refreshments and networking took place from 8:30 – 9:00 am.

**Attendees:** Debra Nelson, Erin Boylan, Ruth Littlefield, Charna Aversa, Jane Waterhouse, Mark Vallone, Christina Lachance, Betty Gilcris, Marianne Barter, Rhonda Siegel, Laura Milliken, Katie Brissette, Shannon McCullough, MaryEllen Schule, Conor Murphy, and Maureen Quinn.

**Welcome and Introductions:** Debra Nelson welcomed new Philanthropic Representative, Christina Lachance as well as members of the public. She also reviewed the process for the public to engage in the Council work. Brief updates were given from Council members. Debra shared that the Frank Porter Graham CD Institute just released the “Preschool Inclusion Finance Toolkit.” Two new studies on Head Start impacts/outcomes: National study lead by Michigan State: Head Start (HS) may protect against foster care placement; children < age 5 93% less likely to end up in the foster care system than those in Child Welfare system with no ECE. Examined multiple programs; HS only one to guard against FC placement. Second study by economists: Significant positive effects of maternal HS access (born in early 1960s) on next generation as compared to those who didn’t participate in Head Start. Suggests that Head Start may disrupt intergenerational poverty. Ruth Littlefield shared that she has been elected co-chair of a national preschool special ed. council. Betty Gilcris informed the group that Head Start training and technical assistance will now be providing a parent and family community engagement training/advocacy workshop to help bridge gap between the frameworks and the actual implementation of the frameworks. Katie Brissette shared that Early Learning NH held their annual conference the previous week. Enrollment was lower than previous years but was still quite successful. Mark Vallone shared that he attended an Evaluation Committee meeting earlier in the month with the Principals Association and they are currently forming groups and goals to be reported out in April. Christina Lachance shared about the ACF Region One “A Whole Family Approach to Jobs: Helping Parents Work and Children Thrive.” The goal of this work is helping to launch an important effort that aims to work differently across stakeholders with the goal of improving policies that support parents in employment and children’s development. Marianne Barter shared that Merrimack Valley Daycare will be having their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration this year and that the new child care licensing rules did not pass JLCAR.

**What's New from Dept. of Education and Dept. of Health & Human Services:**

**NH DHHS Report:** Transformational changes are underway at DHHS and DCYF. New Deputy Commissioner, Tom Pristow from Ohio brings a wealth of experience in public sector HHS. The new DCYF Director will be Joe Ribsam. He is the former Deputy Commissioner of the NJ Department of Children and Families. Chris Tappan will shift her role from DCYF Interim Director to full-time Associate Commissioner of Human Services and Behavioral Health. There is a new Division of Long Term Supports and Services to be focused on challenges associated with aging population, birth through life span. Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS), the Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS), and Special Medical Services (SMS) are being led by Director Christine Santaniello. In DCYF bureaus are being combined, several to be led by bureau chief and assistant bureau chief. Our own Kristin Booth accepted a new position as Senior Planner in the DCYF Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement. Eileen Mullen will lead a prevention effort across the department.

**NH DOE Report:** Jane Waterhouse reported that the Commissioner reflected on his first 6 months and his reflection letter is available on the DOE website. Full day kindergarten will be funded \$1,800 from the state and \$1,100 from Keno per student. When compared to the amount per student received for grades 1 – 12 (\$3,636.06) there is an obvious gap. Keno has passed in the city of Franklin. About 19% of Keno sales will go to an education fund to help pay for full-day kindergarten. November ballots in 11 cities will decide if Keno will be allowed there.

**Minutes Acceptance:** Postponed to the next meeting.

**Directors Report:** Laura gave an update on the public awareness work. Spark Nh held a press conference on how the opioid crisis effects early childhood and what importance intervention plays in the early years in Manchester. Senators Jeanne Shaheen and Maggie Hassan, Congresswoman Annie Kuster, Chief Nick Willard of Manchester PD, and a representative from Governor Sununu's office joined Spark NH. NHPR, WMUR, and the Associated Press covered the event. A link to the articles can be found on Spark NH's website at <http://sparknh.com/news-and-events/press/>. Currently Spark NH is trying to coordinate with the Governor's office to host a press conference that highlights the findings of our Granite State Poll. In November, Spark NH is hosting an Early Childhood Symposium for the Law Enforcement community. A panel of experts will discuss the effect of Adverse Childhood Experiences and a Bedrock presentation will be delivered. A new Home Visiting Task Force is forming as part of Spark NH. Lia Moran leading this group and has interest in bringing all of Home Visiting together to discuss progress in the Granite State.

**Member Presentation:** Ruth Littlefield presented on the iSocial (Improving Social-emotional Outcomes through Complementary Infrastructure and Leadership) System which includes the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) and the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). SSIP is a 6 year plan currently underway. NH was asked to develop a plan to improve social-emotional health for preschool students in the state. They have 8 SAUs working on this goal with them. They are currently three years in and are working to improve outcomes for preschool students with disabilities. The Pyramid Model has an all-inclusive frame that will potentially improve outcomes for all students, not just those with disabilities. SPDG was

awarded in the fall of 2017 and offers \$770,000 per year for 5 years. This will go towards several elements including staff, Pyramid Model implementation, and additional supports. A website will be developed with more information in the future.

**Presentation of Slate of Officers:** Debra Nelson and Erin Boylan agreed to continue as Chair and Co-chair of the Council. A call for consensus will take place at the December meeting.

**Family Engagement Discussion:** Four strategies for family engagement have been identified. Some minor changes were made to the original proposal. A family liaison will be identified for each committee to aid in the communication between Spark NH and families from the community.

**Committee Member Survey Results:** An online survey was sent out to all committee members in June. A similar survey was conducted in June 2015 and June 2016. The purpose was to assess satisfaction with committees and perceptions of Spark NH accomplishments. Results were shared with the Council and can be made available to those who are interested.

**Committee Reports:**

Executive – Debriefed the August Council Meeting and prepared for October's; reviewed the budget; heard updates on strategic planning, Pyramid Model, and other initiatives; and discussed the Governor's Collective Vision initiative.

Evaluation – No report at this time.

Workforce and Professional Development – Members are currently tweaking the timeline of the committee strategic plan. They are looking to develop benchmarks to measure progress.

Policy – In the process of planning a symposium around the Framework for Action. The audience will be people from the early childhood field and it will likely be held in late winter.

Data – No report at this time.

**Public Comment Period:** No comments from the public at this time.

**The Council came to a consensus to adjourn.**

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, December 14, 2017 from 9 – 11 AM at 2 Pillsbury St., Concord, NH