



**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

June 22, 2017

2 Pillsbury Street, Concord, NH

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

**Council Members Present:** Charna Aversa, Kristin Booth, Erin Boylan, Jackie Cowell, Claudia Ferber, Kim Firth, Ruth Littlefield, Tricia Lucas, Debra Nelson, Lara Quiroga, Erica Ungarelli, Mark Vallone, Jane Waterhouse

**Staff Members Present:** Laura Milliken, Katie Brissette

**Others Present:** MaryEllen Schule, Shannon McCullough, Christina Lachance, Conor Murphy, and Ashley Jerome

### Welcome and Introductions:

New members: Welcome Lara Quiroga, who is representing local providers of early childhood education and developmental services. To fill this seat, the Executive Committee identifies an organization providing these services, which then nominates a member for the Council. This year, the Executive Committee identified the Community of Practice organizations.

Welcome members of public and offer brief overview of process to engage the public in our work

- At Council meetings, we look forward to having you introduce yourselves and hearing thoughts/suggestions/questions during last 10 minutes reserved for this purpose
- At any time, contact Laura, me or other Council member to share your thoughts or get more information
- Encourage you to look at the meeting materials to keep you informed of our work; and of course, join a committee.

### Whipshare Highlights

Debra Nelson informed the council that Region 1 OHS shared regional data yesterday on staff turnover rates:

- NH had the highest HS (preschool) teacher turnover rates in the region in PY 2016: 24%, compared to 17% nationally and 18% in Region 1

- Reason for leaving: change in job field (33%) and higher compensation/benefits package in same field: 29%; also 38% other, which we need to dig into
- Makes it hard for programs to serve children and families.

Kim Firth shared that Endowment for Health will be hosting a symposium: Race and Equity in NH: Building Foundations for the Future. Save the date for October 16, 2017. Claudia Ferber shared that NH Association for Infant Mental Health is hosting their 23<sup>rd</sup> annual conference on Sept. 14 and 15. Working with the Worrier: Addressing Anxiety Related Concerns in Young Children. For more information visit their website. <http://nhaimh.org>

Lara Quiroga shared that Project LAUNCH is able to provide additional funds to support the Pyramid Model State Leadership Team.

Kristin Booth shared some details regarding four new DHHS rules: He-C 6910 Employment Related Child Care Eligibility He-C 6912 Preventive and Protective Child Care Eligibility He-C 6914 Child Care Provider Enrollment Requirements He-C 6918 Child Care Provider Billing and Payment Requirements. Kristin also noted that the required health and safety trainings are now posted online for free and they have been sent out to child care providers through child care aware.

Jackie Cowell gave the update that the early childhood standards are being raised and Early Learning New Hampshire is supporting these new rules because the funding for this is available and going through the senate. The 5<sup>th</sup> session of Mind in the Making is scheduled to take place in Gorham. New Hampshire now has 3 master facilitators who are able to hold these unique train-the-trainer events.

Mark Vallone informed the council that Title I allocations came out this week based on 5 defining criteria. These measures determined how much each school was to receive. Despite there being more Title I funds throughout the state some schools received less than previously awarded due to the criteria determined by the state.

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

#### **Dept. of Education:**

State Plan Online – looking for feedback

- Preschoolers are provided services to help prepare them for school
- 65/25 initiative 65% of 25 – 64 year olds will have a high quality post-secondary credential by 2025
- Long term goals and interim targets (ambitious)

Summer Educator's Summit

- Deb Nelson heading up an Early Learning Strand.
- Summit will take place August 2-4 at UNH in Durham.

Conversation with Commissioner

- Intact Family Environment this is the message he wants to get out. Families that have the opportunity to care for their children at home, rather than send to preschool should be the message we are promoting. Grandparents, aunts, uncles.

- Families that do not have the ability to stay home with children need to have access to high-quality pre-school programs that promote play and exploration rather than a focus on academics
- We can work to create policies to reinforce what we want to take place for quality programs. For example: put policies in place that provide advantages to the disadvantaged.
- Vote on budget for KG today  
Bill 191  
\$1100 additional afternoon – total of \$1800 + disparity payments  
Parents to have a half day option – defer to parents  
Wants no pressure on parents to keep students in full day
- Commissioner would very much like to speak with this group

Change in Bureau administration – Heather Gage will be acting Director of Title I and the Bureau of Integrated Programs – McKinney Vento – Homeless, Title Programs, ELL, Migratory children, Neglected, Delinquent or at risk.

USDE released Grant Funds to States.

#### **Dept. of Health and Human Services:**

State budget vote is today. Waiting to see which of DHHS proposed increases are funded

DCYF celebrated the graduation of 19 newly hired Child Protective Service Workers (CPSWs), 3 Juvenile Justice Probation and Parole Officers (JPPOs), and 1 SYSC Youth Councilor (YCs) who recently completed DCYF Core Academy.

NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) wants to remind people living in and visiting the State to take precautions against being bitten by ticks and potentially exposed to Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses. New Hampshire has one of the highest incidence rates of Lyme in the country. According to the DHHS Division of Public Health Services (DPHS), there were an estimated 1,373 cases of Lyme disease identified in the State in 2015, the most recent year for which data are available.

A first of its kind study on heat and its impact on health in three New England states including New Hampshire was published in May in the journal *Environmental Research* provides local information about how much people's health suffers in hot weather.

- Shows that hospital emergency department visits and deaths from all causes in Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island increased significantly, by 7.5 and 5.1 percent
- most vulnerable populations, such as seniors, young children, and people with chronic health conditions

**Minutes Acceptance:** The group came to consensus and no changes were made to April minutes.

#### **Member Presentation:**

Erica Ungarelli presented to the council regarding the Bureau for Children's Behavioral Health at DHHS. This department is a year old and has been working in tandem with other departments that serve children.

Priorities include the following:

- Establish the bureau and its functions relative to the other child serving systems and existing behavioral health delivery systems
- Expansion of the system of care and all the components of RSA 135-F
- System of care for children's mental health
- Addressing gaps in service array and delivery system
- Addressing gaps in populations (EC)
- Addressing gaps in funding and funding mechanisms
- Focus on workforce issues
- Develop a plan to enhance the SUD delivery and service system with effective youth approaches
- Implementing and EBP – MATCH in 4 CMHCs this year and 5 next year. (modular approach to trauma depression and anxiety)
- Working with CMHCs and other providers on children and youth services
- Expanding the FAST forward program – (families and systems together)
- CURES Act Grant State Treatment Response – opioid addiction supports for children birth-10 and their families.

### **Director's Report:**

#### Spark NH Website

Spark NH's new website is live. The address is the same but the site is much improved. We worked to make it easier to use and read and it's even mobile friendly! Most of the features of the old site are still available but we have added pages for New Hampshire's regional early childhood initiatives and made it a bit zippier. Please check it out and refer your friends and colleagues!

#### Strategic Planning

Committees are working hard to flesh out their work plans with goals, objectives and activities. We originally thought that we would have a complete plan by July, but because some of the committees meet less frequently and because some of the committees are quite ambitious, it now looks like September is more realistic. We will report on progress in August.

#### Family Engagement

As a part of the strategic planning process, Spark NH held a meeting in May to discuss how Spark NH can better engage families in its work. Approximately 40 people representing the Council, committee chairs, and Family Partnership and Engagement Task Force attended the meeting and held a productive discussion exploring different ways of ensuring family voices were a part of Spark NH's work. Peggy Kieschnick facilitated. Laura and Peggy will be putting together the recommendations and next steps and Laura will bring this to the Council in August.

#### Developmental Screening, Referral, Diagnosis and Services System (DSRDS) Task Force

Many of you will remember the discussion at the Council level about how we ensure that children are screened early for developmental concerns and that they get to the services they need and don't fall through the gaps. As a result of that discussion, a task force of the Spark NH Quality Committee was convened, including cross sector members of the early childhood system. The group met several times to identify resources and gaps in services relative to early identification, referral, diagnosis and services for young children. Tessa McDonnell facilitated

the group and wrote a report and recommendations based on the group's work which is included in your Council packet. The recommendations to address gaps have been brought to Watch Me Grow and to the Act Early Team for implementation (as possible) and further development.

### Direct to Donors Appeal for Spark NH

I was recently asked to create a direct to donors appeal for Spark NH by the Charitable Foundation. With Lynn Davey's assistance we created an appeal.

### Outreach

Spark NH has been working to connect with regional public health networks and prevention coalitions. Please let Laura know if you have any connections to folks that would benefit from a Bedrock Presentation during one of their regular meeting times.

**Budget Update:** Jackie Cowell led a budget update. If members have any ideas for operating grants, please feel free to let Jackie or Laura know. The executive committee has discussed the idea of reinstating the funding and sustainability task force to work on a clear path for this. ELNH board approves the budget and looks to the Spark NH council for suggestions. The group came to consensus to approve the budget.

**Data Visualization Update:** Members are invited to attend the release party for our data exploration tool that will be added to the new website. The event is planned for July 11 2:00-3:300 at 2 Delta. The tool explores the idea of showing children in the context of their environment and organizes data in the way that children live. Through using this tool Spark NH is hoping to build a more complete picture of how young children and their families are doing.

### **Committee and Task Force Reports:**

#### **Executive:**

- Debriefed May council meeting; prepared June agenda
- Debriefed meeting with Governor Sununu
- Completed and discussed the annual Director's evaluation. No surprise doing fantastic job all around; Generated recommendations for clarifying the evaluation process and forms.
- Discussed draft of strategic plan
- Discussed updates on Vroom, Bedrock present, task force recommendations

**Evaluation:** The committee is working on organizing and finalizing questions for the Granite State Poll— a grant from Endowment for Health has funded our ability to ask the public their views of our current early childhood system. Existing polls are being reviewed to come up with the best possible questions to submit.

**Workforce and Professional Development:** The committee has been working on strategic planning. The groups planning period will be finalized in July.

**Policy:** Continuation of developing goals for the strategic plan.

**Data:** The committee has completed their strategic planning goals. Currently members are planning an event for the release of the data visualization guide later this month.

**Public Comment Period:** Members of the public introduced themselves. MaryEllen Shule provided a compelling State Early Learning Alliance update. Several members of the SELA team attended a national conference in Washington DC. During the conference, three SELA team members presented a workshop highlighting how New Hampshire has been successful with our approach to the State Early Learning Alliance so far. MaryEllen shared that a staff member in Tamworth is saving \$1400 on her home and auto insurance through SELA and a program in the Monadnock region is saving \$3000 on paper goods for her center. Visit [www.SELANHmembers.org](http://www.SELANHmembers.org) to take a look at New Hampshire's platform. Shannon McCullough shared that Spark NH has several social media posts throughout the week. Be sure to follow on Facebook and Twitter. Spark NH's engagement rate is increasing and we appreciate every like and share on our page.

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

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, August 24, 2017, 8:30-11:00 am at 2 Delta Drive