

Spark NH Council Meeting Summary

October 22, 2015

Governor's Council Chambers, State House
107 N Main St, Concord, NH 03301

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

Council Members Present: Jeanne Agri, Shaunna Babcock, Erin Boylan, Jackie Cowell, Mark Vallone, Kimberly Reeve, Rhonda Siegel, Marti Ilg, Debra Nelson, Kerry Wiley, Erika Argersinger, Farah Deselle, Kristin Booth, Kim Firth, Deidre Dunn Tierney, Richie Coladarci, Michelle Lewis, Melinda Sylvester

Staff Members Present: Laura Milliken, Katie Brissette

Others in Attendance: Joelle Martin, Caralie Morrison, Rebecca Johnson, MaryEllen Schule, Carol Garhart, Maureen Burke, Brittany Weaver, Stefany Shaheen

Welcome and Introductions: Council members introduced themselves and shared some announcements. Debra mentioned five or six National Centers funded by the Office of Head Start, Office of Child Care, or both (see <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd/interagency-projects/ece-technical-assistance>). Erin said 42 people attended the Family Resource Connection's annual meeting, they have done a second round of quality training in the state with a result of 120 people trained. Jackie shared that there are 430 people signed up for the Early Learning NH annual conference this Saturday, October 25, at SNHU, a significant increase from the beginning when about 100 people attended. Maureen Burke was introduced as the replacement for Kristin Booth. Kristin also announced that Sue Foley became administrator for the National Center on Afterschool and Summer Enrichment (NCASE). Kim shared exciting news of the Raising NH premiere event at 4:30 pm at the Red River Theater in Concord. Erika said NH CAN is in process of setting priorities. Erika explained that while the national poverty rate fell, the number of children living in poverty in NH has increased along with the percentage of population living in poverty (i.e. 9.2%).

What's New from Dept. of Education and Dept. of Health & Human Services: There was no DOE representative at the meeting but they plan to hire an early childhood person who will sit on the Council. The October 5th event, "Transforming Tomorrow's Workforce Today," was co-hosted by the DOE. In addition to the Summer Summit, the DOE will partner with Early Learning NH to put on an annual early childhood summit. Debra Nelson announced that DHHS Commissioner Nicholas Toumpas is leaving the Department in mid-January. In response to child deaths, the Governor has required an external investigation of DCYF child protection practices to take place. There is a lot of stress among the hardworking staff. Areas of weakness and strength will be evaluated and hopefully resources will be used to reduce caseloads. Lastly, Debra announced that WMUR and the Chronicle received the "Angels in Adoption" award for their segment on promoting adoption.

Minutes Acceptance: October's minutes were accepted without changes.

Director's Report: Laura noted the success of the October 5th event. Jackie added most of the details of the event are posted on the Spark NH website. Extended thanks were given to Kim and everyone at the Endowment for Health. Debra added that eight states have taken information about what they learned about the event and plan to use it in their communities.

Laura announced \$9,600 was available to committees to use for projects. The Data Committee requested \$3,600 to continue working with Peter Antal. The Quality Committee requested the remainder of the amount, about \$4,913.50, to hire a consultant to work on a cross sector collaboration toolkit. The Council came to consensus to approve both requests. A consultant has not been identified, but Richie had a suggestion.

Financials: Generally, financial reports are every two months but for this meeting the financials cover the last four months. Spark NH's fiscal year is January-December. They will soon start working on next year's budget.

Presentation of Slate of Officers for 2016: Erika will step down as Chair of the Council in December. The Nomination Committee presented the slate of officers for 2016 which includes: Effie Malley as Chair and Ruth Littlefield as Vice-chair. No nominations were

made from the floor. The slate will be presented for consensus at the December Council meeting. Effie is excited about the possibility of becoming Chair. She sees it as an opportunity to further align the work of the Children's Behavioral Health Collaborative with early childhood.

Children: the Bedrock of the Granite State Presentation: Jackie Cowell, Laura Milliken and Mark Vallone did the Bedrock presentation. The NH Leaders and Pledge videos were also shown. The Bedrock continues to be shown to various groups around the state. We hope to reach out to more audiences and the Council brainstormed ideas including the Legislature, lunch and learns at businesses, Rotary Clubs, schools, administrators, summit events, health board directors, Seacoast United Way, and Impact Monadnock. Carol Garhart will be doing presentations around the Manchester region. Deirdre Dunn Tierney recommended bringing the Bedrock to a national conference. Jackie named some of the regional ambassadors: Marj Droppa, Cathy McDowell, and now Carol Garhart. **Debra checked with their DCYF lawyer and state employees can take the pledge.*

Committee and Task Force Reports:

- Executive
The committee talked about officer nominations. Peter Antal joined to gather feedback on the data indicators. Poverty competencies from Donna Beegle's work will be discussed at a future meeting.
- Communications and Public Awareness
The new Pledge and NH Leaders videos were shown. Promoting the Raising of America and Raising New Hampshire films was discussed. A private screening of Raising NH will take place on Monday, October 26. The Spark NH banners were the backdrop for the stage at the October 5 summit.
- Data
Peter is working with the committee to create a data dictionary and draft indicators were brought to other Spark NH committees. The "dashboard" that's being created is coming along.
- Workforce & Professional Development
Farrah will become co-chair with Tessa McDonnell. She welcomed new members and is focused on recruiting other individuals. A blueprint for NH's Early Childhood and After School Professional Development System is being reviewed. A goal of the blueprint is to help with defining relationships.
- Policy
The Framework for Action is under review by the Governor. The committee has gained new members. Jackie reminded the Council that the committee meets the first Monday of every month from 9-10:30.
- Evaluation
The committee survey was completed with a total of 49 responses. Most of the responses were from individuals who are not members of the Council. A presentation will be compiled to include feedback and recommendations provided from the survey responses.
- Quality
The committee just met this week. They are hoping to use project funds to hire a consultant to create a toolkit for early childhood program collaboration/coordination.

Public Comment Period: Members of the public introduced themselves. There were no comments or announcements.

Other Council news: Richie shared the success he has had using Vroom with his son and Farrah has shown the VROOM app to family and friends. Debra pledged to get every parent in Head Start signed up with Vroom. Michelle suggested having a write-up to share with parents. The website has short videos and more details. A thoughtful rollout should be planned. Jackie has talked with the Bezos Family Foundation and other funders about hiring someone to focus solely on Vroom. Kristin recommended using post cards, etc. to spread the word. Stefany shared a website known as moocards.com where you can customize cards and receive your shipment quickly.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 10, 2015, 8:30-11:00 a.m.

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