



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 Policy Committee Meeting Summary

Monday, November 2, 2015, 9:00-10:30

Two Delta Drive, Concord NH

Committee Charge: Coordinate the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategic plan for early childhood in NH and collaborate with state agency and policy leaders to identify/support changes in policy regarding expectant families and children from birth through third grade and their families.

Present: Jeanne Agri, Jackie Cowell and Julie Sackett (Committee Co-Chairs), Patti Baum, Greg Bird, Erin Boylan, Maureen Burke, Marjorie Droppa, Kim Firth, Marti Ilg, Jennifer Jenkins, Christina Lachance, Effie Malley, Joelle Martin, Julie McConnell, Jeff McLynch, Laura Milliken, Cara Morrison, Mackenzie Nicholson, Lara Quiroga, Karen Welford and Kelley White

Meeting summary recorder(s): Jackie Cowell

Agenda Items:

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **September Meeting Summary Review (no October meeting due to Oct 5 event)**
3. **Framework for Action for New Hampshire's Young Children**
 - a. **Feedback from the Office of the Governor**
 - b. **Next Steps**
 - i. **Formal Release of the Framework**
 - ii. **Ongoing Coordination and Monitoring of Actions**
4. **Update on Task Force on Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan**
5. **Update on Regional Partnerships**
6. **Family Leadership and Engagement**
7. **December Meeting: Review Committee Workplan and Continue Discussion on Equity**
8. **Meeting Evaluation**

Summary: Introductions were given and a special welcome was made to the several new members of the Policy Committee in attendance. The September meeting summary was reviewed and accepted. There was no October meeting due to the October 5 event, "Transforming Tomorrow's Workforce Today." Several members of the Policy Committee had attended and shared their positive reviews of the event.

The Spark NH Policy Committee was pleased to be informed by Laura Milliken that the Office of the Governor approved their final draft of the white paper of specific actions to accompany the "Framework for Action for New Hampshire's Young Children." The white paper will now be sent to the graphics designer to get ready for publication.

The discussion continued regarding the formal release of the Framework. It was noted that the Communications and Public Awareness (C&PA) Committee was in the process of planning a press event about the fact that New Hampshire's entire congressional delegation – Senator Ayotte, Senator Shaheen, Representative Guinta and Representative Kuster – had all signed the Spark NH “Our Pledge to New Hampshire’s Children.” After a good deal of discussing the pros and cons, the committee came to consensus to recommend to the C&PA Committee that the formal release of the Framework be combined with the upcoming Pledge press event. A task force was formed to help plan the press event with those in charge of the Pledge press event: Katie Brissette, Chair of the C&PA Committee, Laura Milliken, Spark NH Director, and Stefany Shaheen, Spark NH’s Public Awareness contractor. The Policy Committee members volunteering for this task force were Marjorie Droppa, Kim Firth, Jackie Cowell, and Joelle Martin.

The committee then discussed their role moving forward relative to coordinating and monitoring the legislative and other policy actions related to the Framework. It was announced that the Invest in Communities Initiative (ICI) was invited by the Endowment for Health to apply to be the organization that tracks legislation relevant to the Framework and report back to the Policy Committee at its monthly meetings during the upcoming legislative session. There will be an update on this given at the December meeting.

Maureen Burke and other members of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan Task Force gave an update on the progress of the State Plan. The plan is due on March 1 and the public hearing is planned for Tuesday, January 5. It was decided to reach out to Kristin Booth, Administrator of the Child Development Bureau and member of the Spark NH Council, to request that a presentation of the State Plan be given at the January 4 Policy Committee Meeting.

Updates were given on Spark NH’s regional partnerships with the Coös Coalition for Young Children and Families, Project Launch in Manchester, the Lakes Region Financial Stability Partnership, the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Program in Rochester, Concord and Laconia, Impact Monadnock, and the regional early childhood systems initiative being formed in Carroll County. These regional groups meet on a monthly basis in a community of practice, convened by Spark NH, directly following the monthly Policy Committee meeting.

Jackie Cowell announced that she would be remaining on the Policy Committee, but stepping down from her role as Co-Chair by January due to a new commitment. As part of her current job at Early Learning NH, she will also be serving as the part-time executive director of the NH Coalition for Business and Education. The Coalition has chosen three top priorities and one overarching goal. Early Learning is one of the top three priorities. She asked those interested in serving as Co-Chair with Jeanne Agri and Julie Sackett to reach out to her, the other co-chairs, and/or Laura Milliken.

It was noted that the December meeting would include a review of the committee’s workplan and a continued discussion on equity.

The meeting evaluations were positive.

Next meeting date: Monday, December 7, 2015 9-10:30