

**Spark NH Council Meeting Summary**

December 11, 2014
2 Delta Drive, Concord, NH

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

Council Members Present: Ruth Littlefield, Erin Boylan, Kim Firth, Michelle Lewis, Dee Dun Tierney, Marti Ilg, Jeanne Agri, Debra Nelson, Linda Graham, Erika Argersinger, Laura Milliken, Jean Briggs Badger, Jackie Cowell, Effie Malley (by phone), Ellen Wheatley, Rhonda Siegel, Charna Aversa

Others in Attendance: Kristin Booth, Melinda Sylvester, MaryEllen Schule, Carol Garhart, Kristin Booth, Katie Brissette, Caitlin, Kimberly McKenney, Trini Tellez, Amy Brece Grogan, Julie Day

Welcome and introductions:

Council members and committee representatives introduced themselves. Jean Briggs Badger shared that New Hampshire received two Early Head Start partnership grants. The grants will start in March.

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

Jean Briggs Badger presented on behalf of the Department of Education. She reported that New Hampshire did not receive the preschool development grant. Jean discussed that they are putting together a group to look at the Full Service Community Schools grant. The grant requires a 20% match, so they are currently looking for funding sources. CELO and SWIFT have been identified as supporters. The letter of intent is due in May and the full application is due mid-summer. Jean talked about the New Hampshire Network, specifically the early childhood pathways. The NH Network is working with RMC. RMC is developing math and literacy programs. Dr. Barry is creating an early childhood task force and they will have their first meeting in January. The group will identify developmentally appropriate programs and discuss the barriers to those programs. The taskforce will be focusing on kindergarten through third grade. The UDFL Academy sponsored by the Bureau of Special Education. The focus of UDFL is on early literacy and it builds capacity for school districts. The Department of Health and Human Services is facing a deficit of more than 40 million dollars. The CCDF was reauthorized. Shannon R is now overseeing Head Start and Childcare.

Minutes Acceptance: Kristin Booth proposed being removed from the council member list, as she is a committee representative, not a council member. The minutes with the proposed change were accepted.

Director's Report: The 2013 Needs Assessment was released. Spark NH is moving forward with a new needs assessment and Laura requested council input on data that should be included in future assessments. Laura reminded everyone that the Statement of Financial Interest form needs to be completed and returned to the Spark NH office and the Office of the Secretary of State. A draft MOU between Early Learning NH and Spark NH has been created. The MOU is solely formalizing the relationship; no changes are being made to the relationship between Early Learning NH and Spark NH. Spark NH and the Monadnock United way have been chosen to be backbone organizations of Impact Monadnock.

Financials: At the last Council meeting, the Council approved the hiring of Katie Brissette as Deputy Director. The budget is on track. The financials were approved. The Executive Committee proposed the use of the remaining project funds to hire Peggy Kieschnick. The plan is to have Peggy Kieschnick to do more facilitation in the coming year. The use of the project funds were approved.

Equity Discussion: Erika introduced Trini and Amy. Laura discussed the new report from US DOE and DHHS about suspension and expulsion.

Amy reviewed the presentation given and documentary shown at the Council Retreat. Amy introduced the organizational assessment sheet. Council members took a few minutes to fill answer the questions. Amy reconvened the group and asked about members' results. After the members shared their results, Amy moved on to the "What's Race Got to Do with It?" questions. Amy provided NECAP scores for reading and math results for white, Hispanic/Latino, and black/African American populations. She highlighted the disparities between scores. She also provided us with data on out of school suspensions (1+days) for students by male and female and by white, Hispanic/Latino, and black/African American populations. Trini passed out and explained the Data Collection Standards for Race, Ethnicity, Primary Language, Sex and Disability Status sheets and led a discussion around the form. Amy facilitated a discussion around potential causes of the disparities in the test scores. The members broke out into smaller groups to identify the causes of four larger causes (family factors, school factors, preschool factors, labor market factors).

Member Presentation: Child Development Bureau: Ellen Wheatley

Ellen explained who the Child Development Bureau serves, specifically the amount of children that receive CDB services monthly. 28 million dollars for child care scholarships. Ellen broke down the cost of child care per week and explained that child care costs continue to increase annually. Ellen explained the various jobs of the CDB. They administer the child care scholarship program by enrolling child care providers, managing the provider relations phone line, ensuring billing integrity and payment investigation, and they are the liaison with division of client services. They also administer child care quality improvement initiatives and they participate in Spark NH committees. They manage child care resource and referral contracts, afterschool contracts, child care expulsion prevention contracts, tuition assistance for early childhood professionals, and a mentorship program that is run by the Early Education and Intervention Network. The tri-annual federal plan is due June 30, 2015. The CCDBG was reauthorized on November 19th. The changes that have been brought about by the reauthorization will be implemented by early to mid spring. Ellen shared the changes that have to be made under reauthorization. The changes include, but are not limited to, licensed and licensed-exempt providers (serving scholarship children) need fire, health and building inspections; all teaching staff and licensed exempt providers are now required to have 11 health and safety pre-service trainings including CPR and first aid; all child care providers must receive unannounced inspections; must have a QRIS (Quality Rating Improvement System); must have an expedited eligibility process for homeless families; payments to child care providers would be based on enrollment, not attendance. Reauthorization creates challenges: fiscal impact (fewer children served and waitlist). The changes are positive for New Hampshire (for children who are not on the waitlist).

Committee and Task Force Reports: The reports were shortened in the interest of time.

- Executive [att. 4] – **ERIKA ARGERSINGER**
- Communications and Public Awareness [att. 5] – **KATIE**
The committee will be focusing on the webinar and video at the start of the New Year. The 211 taskforce has been evaluating 211, by seeing what is available and evaluating missing pieces.
- EC Data System Committee [att. 6] – **LAURA**
- Quality of EC Programs and Services [att. 7] – **KRISTIN BOOTH**
The Quality Committee has been finalized a dissemination plan for the quality cards. Kristin passed out the Quality Card Sign-Up Sheet, Card Cover Letter, and Quality Cards for Professionals and Families.

- Workforce & Professional Development [att. 8] – **ELLEN WHEATLEY**
- Evaluation [att. 9] – **DEBRA NELSON**
The Evaluation Committee is continuing to work on the Council Member Survey.
- Policy Committee [att. 10] – **JACKIE COWELL**
Jackie requested that Council Members look at page 3 of the December policy minutes to look over the priorities drafted by the policy committee.
- Family Partnership & Engagement Task Force [att. 11] – **JULIE DAY**
The taskforce is working on a brochure on how to provide support to families.

Public Comment Period:

Members of the public introduced themselves but there were no comments.

Next Meeting:

Meeting Adjourn: 11:00 am