

**Spark NH Executive Committee Meeting**

2 Delta Drive, Concord  
January 12, 2016 12:00 – 2:00 pm  
Meeting Summary

**Attendance:** Erika Argersinger, Katie Brissette, Jackie Cowell, Ruth Littlefield, Effie Malley, Debra Nelson.

**Minutes Recorder:** Katie Brissette

**1. December Executive Committee Meeting Summary**

A few edits to the meeting summary were made ahead of the meeting. The Committee came to consensus to approve the December meeting summary.

**2. Debrief last Council Meeting** – Charna’s member presentation sparked a great discussion. The 2016 budget was impressive. New officers were presented. Cary Gladstone from Granite United Way presented important information on EITC and VITA. Very thankful to Erika for all of her work as Chair.

**3. Equity Work** – Dee was unable to attend the meeting so this will be discussed next month.

**4. Granite State Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health – SAMHSA**

Laura was asked for a letter of support for a grant that would fund parent empowerment. There will be other organizations applying for the same grant. The committee approved a letter of support that states Spark NH will work closely with GSFFCMH if they are awarded the grant.

**5. Evaluation Report by Peter Antal**

The committee agreed to Peter’s request to share the information he collected with those who were involved in the process. Eventually, with the Evaluation Committee’s help, a finished document can be shared more publically. A few quick edits were made by the Executive Committee including the spelling of Project LAUNCH and the addition of page numbers.

**6. February Spark NH Council Agenda**

The committee suggested Erin Boylan for the next member presentation. If she is unavailable Richie Coladarci will be asked. There will be a 20 minute Vroom presentation.

**7. Director Evaluation**

Effie is missing evaluations from a few committee members and is asking that they be received by Friday. She will create a document that averages the scores and includes comments and trends as well as goals and significant achievements. Jackie as supervisor and Effie as chair will meet with Laura. Her annual raise is effective February 1. There are a few areas that Laura asked for feedback on that will be addressed at the February meeting. Suggested changes to the evaluation form include removing the director’s signature line on the individual forms because Laura doesn’t receive those, changing the rating scale “1 = significantly exceeds expectations” to “1 = exceeds

expectations” and adding a N/A or unknown option. Doing a six month check in might be better than waiting an entire year.

- 8. Meeting to discuss gaps in the system of identifying and treating developmental issues early**  
After a discussion at the last Council meeting Laura was asked to look into this. She spoke with a number of people to see what efforts existed. She suggested a taskforce of one of the Spark committees. The group would be tasked with collecting/discovering data around children falling through the gaps. Debra mentioned that the Watch Me Grow Steering Committee is creating a short term taskforce to address the system’s current limitations and develop a plan for expanding it beyond screening, referral and parent education to include evaluation, diagnosis and services based on a blueprint for change that was developed in fall 2015. The Watch Me Grow taskforce will be formally connected to Spark NH and Debra recommends the Quality Committee as a logical place. Ruth is concerned that districts’ child find policies aren’t being addressed. Mark Vallone and Ruth will be on the taskforce.
- 9. Spark NH – Early Learning NH MOU update**  
There were a few changes made to the MOU. Effie and Jackie will sign the updated version.
- 10. Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Early Childhood and Spark NH Work Plan Update**  
The Committee would like to have Laura think about what the next steps should be. They will spend some time at the next meeting to discuss the process based on Laura’s suggestions. It is important to remember that there’s no funding for a facilitator and this shouldn’t be a lot of extra work for Laura, the Council or Committees.
- 11. Meeting with Governors’ Office and Commissioners**  
Laura spoke with Jeff Meyers who is willing to have a meeting once he is confirmed as Commissioner of DHHS. The committee felt it was worth meeting even before he is confirmed if that process ends up taking a long time. A full meeting will be scheduled in March based on the availability of the Governor’s Office and Commissioners, Effie as chair and Jackie and Laura. Other members of the Executive Committee will attend if available.
- 12. Bylaws –** The meeting notification section of the bylaws needs to be changed. The proposal is to have it state that meetings will be posted on the Spark NH website and one other place as specified by the Executive Committee. The committee reached consensus to approve this language and it will be brought to the Council at the next meeting.
- 13. Poverty Competency Work -** Debra will ask the co-chairs of the Workforce and Professional Development Committee about incorporating the poverty competencies into their work. She will provide an update at the next meeting.
- 14. NH as a Pyramid State Update –** There is a meeting scheduled for this Friday (January 15) and Debra will provide an update at the next meeting.
- 15. Spark NH Budget**  
We received a \$20,000 grant from the NH Charitable Foundation to continue contracting with Lynn Davey. Spark will also benefit from technical assistance from the Ounce of Prevention Fund. Judy Wright-Parker, who is now with that organization, is helping to make the connection. NHCF is also looking for national funding for early childhood initiatives in NH.

**16. Other**

- a. Vroom – NH is going to be a pilot state for Vroom, with Spark NH as the anchor partner. The plan is to systematically infuse Vroom into the work that's already happening. Child Care Aware of NH was one of only ten states to receive a national grant to embed Vroom into their work. Spark also applied for a grant from the Endowment for Health to create a plan to further roll out Vroom statewide. Kristin Booth did a Vroom presentation for the DCYF management team and Debra Nelson presented it to the Head Start PAC. Upcoming presentations will take place at the Family Support NH Conference and the NHAIMH annual meeting.
- b. Family Engagement Taskforce – Several members of the Executive Committee participated in the latest taskforce meeting. The taskforce will move to having a chair and co-chair and a secretary. They are planning to come up with a work plan which will include getting parents engaged in committee work. The taskforce reported feeling supported and excited for the work ahead.

**17. Meeting Evaluation**

The meeting ran well with Effie's leadership and Erika's support. The committee was able to get through a lot of agenda items.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 9, 2016 from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.