

# Maryland SICC

STATE INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)  
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services  
Early Childhood Intervention & Education Branch  
200 W. Baltimore Street, 9th floor, Baltimore, MD 21201  
(410) 767-0261  
*Brenda Hussey-Gardner, Ph.D., M.P.H., Chair*

## SICC General Meeting

JHU Center for Technology in Education  
Columbia, Maryland  
1:00 – 4:00 PM  
**January 5, 2012**

### Minutes

**Attendance:** Brenda Hussey-Gardner, *Chair*, Brenda Wilson, Cascelia Burgess, Curtisha Hopkins, Amy Sargent, Elizabeth Kelley, Rachel London, Linda Ramsey, Erin Stauder, Paula Boykin, Margaret “Mike” Berman

**Excused:** Rosemary King-Johnston

**Guests:** Ed Feinberg, *Anne Arundel County Infants and Toddlers Program*, Jessica Silva, *Governor’s Office for Children*, Sharon Leyden, *Prince George’s County Infants and Toddlers Program*, Beth Boyle, *JHU/Montgomery County LICC*, Lori Tolen, *Kennedy Krieger Institute*, Amy Cropp, *Montgomery County Public Schools*, Linda Tsantis, *JHU*, Monica Grant, *Frederick County Infants and Toddlers Program*, Charles Baugh, *Baltimore City Infants and Toddlers Program*

**Staff:** Thomas Stengel, Pam Miller, Dan Szczepaniak

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Dr. Hussey-Gardner called the meet at 1:13 p.m.

#### **I. Welcome Remarks and Introductions**

- a. Participants introduced themselves, including guest members from various public and private agencies/organizations.
- b. Dr. Brenda Hussey-Gardner welcomed guests and expressed her excitement about seeing so many local B-5 program representatives.

#### **II. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- a. SICC members were given an opportunity to review the minutes from the November 2011 general meeting.
- b. Per Dr. Amy Sargent, page 4, letter “l”: omit words “until the” and make into two separate sentences, as there are no plans at the moment for EC Gateway to dissolve after B-5 content is fully embedded in Maryland Learning Links.
- c. The minutes were approved with the usual 48-hour hiatus to recommend edits.

#### **III. Announcements and Public Comment**

*Announcements*

- a. Dr. Hussey-Gardner noted that Dr. Valentine’s public comment on insurance restrictions for physicians serving children with Autism Spectrum Disorders has been postponed.
- b. No other announcements were offered.

*Public Comment*

- a. No public comments were offered.

**IV. Director’s Report**

As Interim Branch Chief for the Early Childhood Intervention and Education Branch, Mr. Tom Stengel provided the following information and updates.

- a. The Branch Chief and Management Assistant vacancies at MSDE have not yet been posted; however, it is anticipated that they will be sometime within the month of January.
- b. As for an update on State complaints and due process hearing requests, there is one current complaint that was filed in November, but then put on hold in December because the parent filed a due process hearing request. The case involves a transition from C to B issue.
- c. The Branch has been working hard on the Annual Performance Report (APR). It is currently being reviewed by OSEP, and Mr. Stengel and Mr. Brian Morrison (MSDE ECIE Branch) are going to Washington, DC next week to get feedback from them on the report. The Branch has also solicited feedback from the MidSouth Regional Resource Center and expects to get that back sometime next week as well.
- d. The Branch is preparing for a Division Directors’ meeting next Wed., Jan. 11, 2012. Infants/Toddlers Directors will be meeting in the morning, and will then have a shared lunch with Special Ed. Directors, including a facilitated discussion. Special Ed. Directors will then meet in the afternoon. When not in their designated morning or afternoon meeting session, Directors from both groups will have access to a meeting room to engage in discussions amongst themselves.

*New Regulations—Current Status and Next Steps*

- a. Four key changes:
  1. Assessment team member qualifications (i.e., what constitutes multidisciplinary based on team member qualifications; still need to get clarification about this from OSEP).
  2. Use of individualized screenings once child is referred to I/T.
  3. Extended Option—new regulations do not allow Maryland’s current policy of using 4<sup>th</sup> birthday as cut-off for eligibility. Maryland is going to have to change and use one of the 3 options posed in the regulations; however, the MSDE has also written to OSEP asking if current 4<sup>th</sup> birthday cut-off can be used until 2012.
  4. Every time an evaluation is completed, a new consent form must be signed.
- b. MSDE has decided that they are not just going to write policies and procedures to address these new regulations. Instead, they are going to pursue changing COMAR.
- c. Mr. Stengel shared the “Proposed Schedule for Revised IDEA Part C Regulations” handout.
  1. Ms. Paula Boykin expressed concern about whether or not the Feb. 29<sup>th</sup> deadline for the draft regulations on the proposed timeline is too soon given

the in-depth nature of many of the changes that need to be considered (e.g., adding screening to Maryland's assessment process; issues surrounding the continuation of the Extended Option). Mr. Stengel shared that it is his understanding that the regulations need to be implemented by July of 2012 even if they are not officially published in COMAR, so this is what has driven the rigorous timeline proposed for making the changes to COMAR.

2. Dr. Sargent asked for clarification about merging the previously mentioned (at the 11/3/11 SICC General Meeting) Extended Option stakeholder workgroup with this proposed COMAR change stakeholder group (tentatively scheduled to be held 2/7/12). Mr. Stengel indicated that there will be no separate Extended Option workgroup. The topic will be addressed by the COMAR stakeholder group.

*Preliminary FY2010 SPP/APR Data*

- a. Mr. Stengel and Ms. Pam Miller (MSDE ECIE Branch) shared preliminary Statewide Part C Compliance Indicators data, which included children on the Extended Option.
  1. There have been increases in performance in Indicators 2 (Natural Environments), 4a (Family Outcomes—Know Rights), 4b (Family Outcomes—Communicate Needs), and 4c (Family Outcomes—Help Children Develop and Learn), 5 (Child Find—Birth to One), 6 (Child Find—Birth to Three), 8a (Transition Outcomes), and 8b (Notification to LEA).
    - i. Dr. Hussey-Gardner noted some remarkable improvements in the data and significant performance over target. Maybe because of the Extended Option? If families decide to stay with Part C program, that probably indicates that they are very satisfied with services. Maybe there are more of these families completing the survey?
    - ii. Met target with regard to both Child Find—Birth to One and Birth to Three. These targets are based on census data for the State. Maryland has struggled with the Birth to One Indicator in the past. One of the reasons that it was met this year is because census data for children B-3 has decreased.
      - Dr. Ed Feinberg asked whether or not the goal is to get children services in general or to get them services through the I/T program. Often, only when insurance runs out do families then come to I/T. Why must it be just in the Part C system when the goal should be to get children the services they need? The implication with these Indicator data is that the children are not receiving the services they need, when in fact they are (but just maybe not through I/T).
      - Concern about changes to formula used to calculate these Indicator data, basing it on live births census data.
  2. There have been decreases in Indicators 1 (Timely Service), 3a (Child Outcomes—Social/Emotional), 3b (Child Outcomes—Knowledge and Skills), 3c (Child Outcomes—Behavior to Meet Needs), 7 (45-Day Timeline), and 8c (Timely Transition Planning Meeting).
    - Ms. Miller noted that the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process was used for the first time this year to report Child Outcomes data. Best practice is to look at 2 years of data using same method.

- MSDE offered extensive training on the COS process and its integration in the IFSP process in the summer and fall of 2011. The hope is that this will improve data for 2011.
  - There were no children in progress category A (i.e., made no progress from entry to exit) this year, which is great. There was also an increase in children in progress category C (i.e., started to close the gap from entry to exit).
    - Dr. Feinberg highlighted that it is important to probe during COS process to determine what influenced progress vs. just assuming it was or was not because of EI services.
3. Indicators 9 (Correction of Noncompliance), 10 (Complaint Timelines), 11 (Due Process), 12 (Hearing Requests), 13 (Mediation Requests) and 14 (Timely & Accurate Data) remained consistent at 100% (meeting targets).
- Mr. Stengel noted that the one that tends to “make or break us” in terms of reaction from OSEP is Indicator #9—Correction of Noncompliance. We met the target at 100%, so that is excellent.
4. Ms. Miller shared data specific to children in Extended Option.
- i. Indicator 2 (Natural Environments) increased.
  - ii. Family Outcomes Indicators 4a (Family Outcomes—EI Helped Family) and 4b (Family Outcomes—Ready for School) decreased.
  - iii. Indicators 3 a, b, and c (Child Outcomes)—Summary Statement #1 Targets Not Met (on approx. 140 children), but Summary Statement #2 Targets all Met. Need to explore what this means.
  - iv. Discussion about examining these data in relation to inclusive opportunities for 3-and 4-year-olds, as well as children who receive a combination services in both home and community settings.
  - v. Comments made about value of discussing the root causes of changes in Indicator performance. We are no longer taking the approach of examining what “we” did for children and families. It is now a conversation about the multi-faceted influences on the impact of services on children and families.

Nancy Vorobey (Section Chief, ECIE Branch) shared preliminary Statewide Part B Compliance Indicators data. These data did not include children on Extended Option.

1. There have been increases in performance for Indicators 7a (Child Outcomes—Social/Emotional), 7b (Child Outcomes—Knowledge and Skills), 7c (Child Outcomes---Behaviors to Meet Needs), and 8 (Parent Involvement).
- Source for Preschool Child Outcomes data is the Work Sampling System (WSS), which is also used as the assessment tool for the general education Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) kindergarten readiness.
  - For all three Child Outcomes Indicators, met targets for Summary Statement #1, but not for Summary Statement #2.
2. There has been a decrease in performance for Indicator 12 (Early Childhood Transition).
- i. Ms. Vorobey noted that while there are areas in which 100% Targets were not met (e.g., Indicator 12—Early Childhood Transition), performance should still be considered strong at, for example, at 99.1%.
  - ii. Narrative portion of SPP/APR report includes descriptions of corrections of noncompliance.

3. States not required to report Preschool Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) data in the SPP/APR.

## V. Legislative Update

- a. Ms. Rachel London shared with the group that there has not been much information released about the upcoming legislative session. Home visiting is most likely going to be a priority early childhood issue.
  1. Ms. Liz Kelley shared dates she has heard of for various budget hearings.
  2. Ms. London informed the group that the SICC Legislative Action Committee (LAC) will be submitting written and in-person testimony during session and will provide updates to the Council throughout as more information is released.
- b. Mr. Stengel shared a draft of the new ECIE B-5 information booklet. He drew the group's attention to page 7 of the booklet, where there was a revision made to way in which data are reported on the number of children eligible for MITP compared to State General Fund dollars per child, in comparison to last year's booklet.
  1. The following comments/suggestions were made by the group:
    - i. Present info./data on 24 separate jurisdictions.
    - ii. Include more info./data on the breakdown of local on funding sources on page 7.
    - iii. Highlight that programs are underfunded mandates--children have to be served, so locals must pay for this no matter what.
    - iv. Difference between mandated vs. non-mandated services and how these data in the booklet should be presented to help readers understand those differences.
    - v. Need to include data on drastically increasing numbers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders somewhere in the booklet.
    - vi. Change word "benefit" to "receive" on page 2.
    - vii. Add reference to funding for Extended Option in section of booklet starting on page 10.
    - viii. Omit reference to age 5 in Chandler's story family testimonial on page 11, since Option is only now offered up to age 4.
    - ix. When presenting data on gains in school readiness, consider also presenting data on and highlighting existing gap between children without and with disabilities.
  2. Dr. Feinberg noted an important issue that everyone should keep abreast of in the coming months, that being that as preK COMAR is enacted, the number of opens slots for children with disabilities will change. For example, in Anne Arundel County, because of the required increase in the number of income-eligible children served, there will be very few children with disabilities served (because slots will be taken away from that category and reallocated to the income-eligible category).
  3. Mr. Stengel invited participants to send additional comments about the booklet to him by email at [tstengel2@msde.state.md.us](mailto:tstengel2@msde.state.md.us) (copying Dr. Sargent at [asargent@jhu.edu](mailto:asargent@jhu.edu) to keep SICC LAC in the loop) by Wed., Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>. A final draft will be available by Wed., Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>.
  4. The SICC LAC will be preparing one-pagers for both I/T and Preschool to summarize key data in final booklet. Wording can be adjusted to meet advocacy needs (e.g., sustaining vs. increasing funding).

**VI. Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (ELCG)**

Ms. Liz Kelley from MSDE Division of Early Childhood Development shared information about Maryland's accepted application for the ELCG.

- a. Maryland has received a \$49,999,143 award for this grant.
- b. The money is strictly for capacity and infrastructure building vs. programs.
- c. Ten major projects:
  1. Creating local Early Childhood Councils.
  2. Implementing Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), known as Maryland Excels, for all early learning and development programs.
  3. Establishing an Early Childhood Breakthrough Center that provides quality capacity-building for programs participating in Maryland EXCELS and expands models of excellence to attendance areas of Title 1 schools in school improvement.
  4. Revising Early Learning Standards to align with Common Core Standards.
  5. Professional development to promote use of Early Learning Standards.
  6. Refining and revising Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS). This will be a partnership with Ohio, and will include developmental screenings of children B through 3 by child care providers.
  7. Addressing the health and behavioral needs of children through a coherent set of early intervention and prevention programs.
  8. Creating a Coalition of Family Engagement and three statewide outreach efforts to promote family engagement.
  9. Establishing Leadership in Early Learning Academies for educators from school and early childhood programs to promote developmentally appropriate teaching practices for children in PreK through grade 2.
  10. Enhancing existing early childhood data system, commonly known as CATS, which tracks licensing, credentialing, and subsidy. This will link to the larger Maryland Longitudinal Data System.
- d. Summaries of each project, as well as the benchmarks that will be used to assess their progress, are available in Maryland's application. To access the application in its entirety, Ms. Kelley recommended Googling "Early Learning Challenge Results." That will take you to the U.S. Dept. of Ed. website where all states' applications are available.

**Dr. Hussey-Gardner adjourned the meeting at 3:43 p.m.**