

**Minutes
IGA Governing Board
Contract for
Early Childhood Educational Services
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 30, 2015
OPRFHS High School Board Room**

The meeting commenced at 7:10 p.m.

Present: Peter Barber, Ann Courter, Rupa Datta, Colette Lueck, Dr. Jackie Moore, Cara Pavlicek, Bob Spatz, and Jeff Weissglass. Gail Kalmerton, recording secretary.

Absent: Dr. Steve Isoye and Dr. Carol Kelley

Visitors: Bonnie Andorka, Susie Breckenstein, Laura Crawford, Jason Dennis, Shannon Ellison, Robert Goerge, Laura Jordahl, Debbie McCann, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, Bruce McNulty, Therese O'Neill, Diana Rosenbrock, Greg Sanders, Carollina Song, David Schwartz, Gail Shelton, and David Weindling.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve the agenda, as presented; seconded by Mr. Spatz. A voice vote resulted and the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve the minutes of May 6, 2015; seconded by Mr. Barber. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Public Comment: Mr. Bruce McNulty, President of the Board of Directors of Parenthesis Family Center stated that he and a couple of staff members were present to answer any questions people might have about the services they have been delivering under their contract with the Collaboration.

Mr. Weissglass thanked him.

Measuring Progress Report: Follow-up on May 6 Report on Database and Impact Measures

The Measurement and Evaluation Committee presented its goals for the report as follows:

- 1) Suggest changes to outcome wording and propose relevant sub-measures.
- 2) Describe changes to policy and data collection context that impacts measuring progress for each outcome measure.
- 3) Identify progress goals for each outcome measure.
- 4) Describe program and measurement activities needed to attain progress goal.

The overall context is that mobility significantly impacts the Collaboration's work, as families; economic status is not static, and they move from community to community. The state budget's

uncertainty significantly affects early childhood services, as families may no longer be eligible for subsidies. And, service providers have reduced access to both support services (through ExceleRate?) and professional development opportunities.

The chart below indicates the type of committee and its outcome measures.

Committee	Outcome Measurers
Publicly-Funded Preschool	Child Outcomes 2 and 3, Service Delivery Outcome 1
Professional Development	System Outcomes 2, 3, and 4
Developmental Screen	Child Outcome 1 and Service Delivery Outcome 4
Measurement and Evaluation	System Outcome 1, Service Delivery Outcomes 2 and 3

Each outcome measure was presented in scorecard form with one indicator for the ability to measure progress and one indicator for data collection. The meeting agenda focused on 3 of the 11 outcome measures: 1) Child Outcome 3, which were both green; 2) Service Delivery Outcome 1, which were yellow and green; and 3) System Outcome 4 – green and yellow.

The Collaboration recommended a shift in the reporting schedule: 1) issue progress reports on all outcome measures at the annual September meeting of the IGA Board, using data from the school year completed the previous June, which significantly reduces the gap in time between data collection and reporting; and 2) The Collaboration committees would issue progress reports at the February meeting on their action plans on their data and give updates at the May meeting. This will provide people with time over the summer to analyze data and give additional time to formulate appropriate responses.

A scorecard was developed that allowed the progress of each committee to be reflected. Each had developed plans for using data from the outcome measures to inform future programs and services. The methods include identifying contextual issues that may impact the work, specifying the expected progress on each goal, program activities to achieve the progress and measurement activities to improve data. The measure of progress was coded red, yellow or green. Red indicates significant issues with data collection. Green indicates that progress looks good and yellow means that the Collaboration believes that some progress is possible.

The presentation addressed three outcomes that represented three different combinations of the color-coded indicators. The Child Outcome 3: percent of children entering kindergarten demonstrating age-appropriate proficiency in the kindergarten readiness assessment administered by District 97, had 2 green lights; yet, the baseline measure for the 2013-14 school year was not good because a number of children were not assessed. It provided a disproportionate sampling and thus progress on the baseline will be difficult to interpret. District 97 has set a goal of ensuring that they assess the greatest number of children possible at kindergarten entry. The

online registration process allows the Collaboration to have a better sense of what children's early learning experiences have been.

A different indicator involved looking at kindergarteners who qualify for the Free and Reduced Price lunch program, attend Preschool for All, Head Start, or to a highly rated preschool that holds NAEYC Accreditation or has a Gold Circle of Quality. A different sub-measure would look at kindergarteners who had 504 Plans or IEPs. Data as to where children went to preschool is missing from 2013-14. The current online registration process now includes different drop-down boxes, so more information should be forthcoming.

Ms. Lueck stated that if the risk factors are unknown, then it's hard to know how to help the children and further disconnects the residents who are struggling. Note: the state is impacting people's choices. Families cannot afford full-day childcare if they do not receive childcare subsidies, etc.

Dr. Moore suggested looking at things that could have a significant developmental impact during preschool years, i.e., moving many times, homelessness, foster care, contact with children coming from communities with trauma, violence, etc. She suggested not allowing an applicant to move on to the next section of the online registration process without completing the current section. Most parents know where their children went to preschool, so if they could have the choice of "other," the Collaboration could go back to those families for more information. Ms. Newberry Schwartz stated that the Collaboration could get richer data from Head Start, home visiting, etc. The information received from kindergarteners allows the Collaboration to develop a better outreach strategy. Ms. Newberry Schwartz also stated that establishing a more unified intake process for the publicly funded preschools will result in better scoring. The Collaboration would like District 97 to consider this for its large Preschool for All program. Mr. Spatz reported that District 97 admits students who require IEPs and 504 Plans in kindergarten, and it could schedule focus groups to get missing information. Income status may change during the 0-5 years. In addition, certain delays are not detected until later in the child's life.

System Outcomes – Progress Scorecard

More centers are becoming part of the quality rating system, and thus, the goal received a green code. Ms. Rosenbrock engages childcare centers. Little professional development monies are available for childcare workers, yet when they engage in trainings, they receive registry credit hours which, when accumulated, can move a provider to a higher level in ExceleRate. The Collaboration's services make a difference to the local providers. The Collaboration collects its own data, has strong relationships with the providers, and as such, the providers are forthright about their status. The Collaboration prefers data from the state, rather than it being self-reported, but the state is not making that information available in a reliable form.

Update on Data Partnership with State

Robert Goerge of Chapin Hall reported that he met with lead staff in the Illinois Department of Human Services one year ago and received support for their data sharing request. Since that time, a new governor was elected. The current administration was slow to get its new leadership in position, and the Department of Human Services (DHS) has not granted the right for anyone to use its data. The legal staff has to be reconstituted. However, things are beginning to move

with people being in the right place and DHS is starting to make decisions. Its leadership is positive about the Collaboration, and Oak Park is a model of the state. The Collaboration needs childcare and Medicaid data and while optimistic, this is taking longer than expected. Chaplin Hall does not have access to the data.

A question was raised about the changing context for families given the state budget and whether the Collaboration and Oak Park will be able to respond. If childcare subsidies are not reinstated, parents will be unable to go to work, they will be poor, and the child care providers will lose their jobs. All agreed that this scenario would present a major challenge to the Collaboration, to the early childhood and to Oak Park and River Forest as well as the state.

Report on Contract Implementation Progress

The Collaboration for Early Childhood made significant progress in establishing integrated early childhood system of high-quality services and programs in the community during 2014-15.

The Collaboration provided the five key areas in the Annual Report:

- 1) Incorporating Developmental Screening in Child Care and Health Provider Settings. It reports on a pilot project involving 20 early learning providers and a medical practice that has successfully screened 1,037 children birth-to-kindergarten age, as a result of the training they received on how to implement development screenings into their programs and practices. In addition, it reports on the Hearing and Vision Screening program that provided these important services to 1,327 three-to-five-year-old children
- (2) Providing Information and Support for Families of Infants and Children. It discusses and summarizes the outreach, education and information sessions that help parents shape and promote children's optimal development and provide an update on the home visiting program offered through its contract with Parenthesis Family Center.
- (3) Conducting Professional Development for Early Care Providers and Promoting High Quality Public Preschool Programs. Discussions ensued regarding the training activities around the ExceleRate Quality Rating program, the Annual Symposium, and the other professional development activities and continuing education programs. Engagement with four local preschool programs was described, helping them to incorporate the new Teaching Strategies GOLD performance measures.
- (4) Building and Implementing a Unified Early Childhood Database. An update was provided on the work with Chapin Hall to implement Unified Early Childhood Database.

The report included the detailed plans for the 2015-16 school year for the above.

Ann Courter expressed thanks on behalf of the entire Collaboration to the people who put this excellent report together: Robert Goerge, Greg Sanders, Debbie McCann, Bob Spatz, Laura Crawford, and Carolyn Newberry Schwartz. She also recognized the many additional people who have been deeply involved in refining these outcome measures so they are clearly related to behaviors and policies and programs that can be changed to improve children's lives. These

folks have thoughtfully and bravely set ambitious targets for each measure, and are committed to being transparent and accountable to you, our funders, and the community.

Ms. Courter continued, “These goals will guide the on-going work of the Collaboration’s 60 partner agencies and providers, and our staff. We applaud their creativity and dedication to the children and families of Oak Park and River Forest, and their commitment to (1) work together collaboratively and (2) to use the outcome measures in their work to change the trajectory for children who would otherwise fall behind.

“Helping every single child enter kindergarten ready and eager to learn is a complex challenge. Some children face many obstacles: inadequate prenatal care, poor nutrition, lack of access to physical activity, violence in the home, no one reading and talking to them from birth, undetected developmental delays, untreated tooth decay, lagging social and emotional skills. Guided by research, the Collaboration is working to help families on multiple levels.

As the database is further refined and our partners incorporate the results in their daily work, we will see new areas where coordination and collaboration can improve outcomes for our children. By regularly meeting in our committees, building relationships across traditional boundaries, and grappling with hard questions, like why gaps in services are happening, we are coming to common understanding about how practices can change so that families can better access supports. We will figure out how to better share information for families so they will know how important it is to talk, sing, and read to very young children. Solutions are emerging--- new policies are getting put in place at the school district, in doctor’s offices, and in child care centers, because of our collaborative work.

“I want to bring you up to date on our latest accomplishments by using our new website: Our report highlights our developmental screening pilot program, where over 1,000 children ages 0-5 were successfully screened in 20 early learning sites and a medical practice. In the past few months, Shannon Ellison, our screening coordinator, has recruited another 10 sites, including the park district preschool, more medical practices, and additional child care providers, and she will provide 15 hours of training and on-going monthly support for staff in each of these sites. Our hearing and vision screening program screened over 1300 3-5-year-olds at 36 child care and preschool sites in Oak Park and River Forest.

“I also want to highlight that the trainings Diana Rosenbrock is now offering to child care centers, preschools and family care providers to engage in the state’s ExceleRate quality program are of great interest, with all sessions filling within 24 hours.

“The Collaboration and several community partners will be bringing Dr. Dana Suskind to speak about the importance of talking to very young children—research shows that very early exposure to math words, spatial language, and rich vocabulary provides a platform for later success in elementary and high school. She has been speaking around the country about her Thirty Million Words Initiative, and has been well-received everywhere. Save the date: the evening of Thursday, November 12, at Holmes School.

“Through the Parents As Teachers home-visiting program for 0-3-year-olds, we have worked with Parenthesis to help over 50 families learn parenting skills. Through the Parenting Resource

Program, Parenthesis has had contact with over 1,000 families by providing workshops and information.”

Ms. Courter referenced an August 11, 2015, *Wednesday Journal* editorial that stated “that the future of the state is won and lost each day in how we care for our youngest, how we attempt to raise up those who have needs that we know we can ameliorate. We thank you for your vision and your continuing support for this Collaborative effort to raise up the children in our community.”

Ms. Courter stated that with access to high-quality child care and preschool experiences for 3-5 year olds; by increasing developmental screening throughout the community; by providing professional development opportunities for the diverse workforce that educates, provides medical care, and watches over our youngest children, and by helping parents find the resources and information they need to support their children’s development. Oak park and River Forest will have a highly developed early childhood system.

The Collaboration will have a new newsletter in November and has done a soft launch of the new website.

Dr. Moore asked that parents be approached from a strength-based position rather than talking about risk factors. Building on strengths, accessibility, and talking or reading to children should become a part of the community conversation. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the state have programs to help all community members understand the importance of conversation and screenings. Families have to be asked what they need and then be given contact information on where to go for that help.

Mr. Weissglass, too, spoke of Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD), which is at the center of a larger and growing movement that considers local assets the primary building blocks of sustainable community development. Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, asset-based community development draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future.

Financial Report

David Weindling presented the financial report which contained 2 sets of data: 1) current fiscal year to date(July and August), and 2) fiscal year that ending June 30, 2015.

The Collaboration partnered with the Oak Park runners club and provided volunteers for the Good Life Race. The Oak Park Runners Club donated \$25,000 as a result of the partnership. .

Mr. Weindling reviewed the budget to actual statements. Revenue exceeded targets in every area for fiscal year 2014-2015. The last line shows a net revenue figure of \$250,000. That net came largely from contractual line items that were under spent. In some cases, the savings were gained by leveraging volunteer resources. This was especially true for the work on the database and indicators. Some things such as grant writing, graphic design work, communications, etc. started later than anticipated and the full amount budgeted was not expended. Database

development was not delayed because of a family leave situation at Chaplin Hall, but that will be carried forward next year. Also, monies budgeted for general consulting, legal fees, etc., were not used.

Per the resolution adopted by the IGA Governing Board at its meeting on May 6, 2015, the Collaboration will be returning \$77,256 in unspent funds from the fiscal year 2013-2014 related to its Contract with District 97, District 200 and the Village of Oak Park. The Resolution regarding retention of unspent funds specified that funds received pursuant to the Payment Schedule under Exhibit A of the IGA which is not fully expended during the fiscal year for which they are received will be deemed savings and carry forwarded to the next fiscal year up to 11% of total annual contractual payments. It also specified that at the time of the annual audit pursuant to 3.8, the Collaboration shall report the amount of funds remaining as net revenue at fiscal year-end that are in excess of the 11% cap (if any) and remit a percentage of those funds based on the percent of the total revenue to the Administrative District within 30 days of completion of the Annual Audit. After the Collaboration reaches a total amount of 3 months operating reserve based on the contract year budget, the remaining dollars calculated based on the percentage described above are to be returned to the Administrative District, even if the 11% cap has not been reached,. The unspent contractual funds for the fiscal year 2014-2015 will be calculated in October 2015 when the audit is complete and returned to the Administrative District. There was an agreement to return these funds to the administrator to be held in escrow.

Adjournment

At 8:50 p.m., Mr. Weissglass moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Lueck. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Submitted by
Gail Kalmerton