

**IGA Governing Board Regular Meeting
Contract for Collaboration for Early Childhood
Wednesday, February 25, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Peter Barber, Amy Felton, Steven Isoye, Colette Lueck, Al Roberts, Bob Spatz, Jeff Weissglas
By Phone: Cara Pavlicek

Absent: Ralph Lee

Others Attending:
CEC Board Members – Carollina Song
CEC Founding Board Member – Eric Gershenson

Diana Rosenbrock, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, David Weindling, Shannon Ellison, Kathy Kern, Gail She Hon, Chris Miller, Rebecca Bibbs and Sheryl Marinier (recording secretary)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 29, 2014 meeting were approved unanimously as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PROGRESS REPORT – COLLABORATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

Carollina Song reported on the following:

Developmental Screening:

The Collaboration is working with 35 centers to provide hearing and vision screenings; a significant increase from the 29 centers it was working with last year.

The Collaboration has secured funding from an individual donor to offer a community hearing and vision screening in the spring. This will serve those children not enrolled in childcare centers or preschools in Oak Park and River Forest, as well as children in family childcare homes. Developmental screenings will also be offered. This is significant because the Collaboration will be reaching populations not being served by center-based screenings.

The developmental screening coordinator has begun encouraging centers to use the online database to track children who are being monitored and/or referred for additional services.

The second screening window opened in February. The 20 pilot sites are busy conducting the second round of developmental screenings.

Parent Information and Support:

Parentesis currently serves 50 families in the home visiting program. The target for the end of the fiscal year is 75-90 families. Parentesis has also touched more than 650 families through the Parenting Resource Program, mostly via workshops. The Collaboration continues to closely monitor caseload and other contractual benchmarks.

Professional Development:

The Collaboration has been working with centers and preschools that have not engaged in the Illinois Quality Rating system to encourage their involvement. Twelve centers have participated and 53 staff members have received support to help them meet professional development requirements in order to achieve higher levels of quality.

The Collaboration facilitated the involvement of ten family childcare providers in the pilot to test the process for obtaining a family childcare credential from the state. This is a new initiative and Diana Rosenbrock, our professional development coordinator, chaired the committee that created the credential. In addition, one of the Collaboration's board members and one of its volunteers drafted the competency benchmarks for the credential.

Recent Events:

Physicians Breakfast Meeting was held at the end of October. Thirty-five people attended this event; the topic of that meeting was the research documenting the cognitive, social-emotional, and physical benefits of breastfeeding.

Saturday Morning Fever - The Collaboration organized this event for families on January 31. The Collaboration calls this event a fundraiser and considers this part of its responsibility to build a constituency for jurisdictional support of early childhood services. 91 families attended, and attendance included a mix of families from a diverse array of backgrounds, including some hard-to-reach families that Parenthesis had been trying to enroll in parent support services.

12th Annual Symposium – This event was held on Saturday, February 21, 2015. It is the Collaborations signature event for professional development. The impact of the Symposium is amplified by the state's Excelerate initiative, which incentivizes childcare providers and preschools to aim for continuous quality improvement in their programs. It was reported that more than 350 people attended. The theme of this year's Symposium was "The Dance of Diversity: Meeting the Unique Needs of Every Child". For the first time this year, an early-bird session was offered, which meant that attendees could earn as many as five professional development credits. District 97 was acknowledged for facilitating.

Upcoming Events:

Good Life Race - The Oak Park Runners Club has once again seen fit to name the Collaboration the beneficiary of its upcoming Good Life Race, which will be taking place on April 12, 2015.

May IGA meeting – Measurement and Evaluation Committee Report - The Measurement and Evaluation Committee will be reporting on progress on the Unified Early Childhood Database. That committee has been meeting every two weeks over the past couple of months in preparation for the upcoming presentation.

Data Collection:

The Collaboration has been spending significant time identifying supports for Parenthesis and providing feedback to ensure that data collection is as complete and accurate as possible. A new database was secured for the Parenting Resource Program. The state MIECHV (Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting) office is providing technical support and reports on data collection to improve the use of the Visit Tracker database that supports the Parents as Teachers program.

The effort to encourage the centers participating in the developmental screening pilot program to use the online tracking database has just begun; at the moment four out of 20 sites are using that online system. The Collaboration is working to establish an orientation to data by the early childhood sector that sees the real value of maintaining digital records of service delivery and children's progress, monitoring progress and impact of the program, and as a tool for continuous quality improvement.

Impact Beyond the Community:

The Collaboration's model continues to be of interest locally, regionally, and at the state level. Staff continue to share their expertise with other communities and on state-level committees. The Collaboration has been able to leverage a great deal of technical assistance from the state's MIECHV program.

UPDATE ON THE RESERVE POLICY

President Felton reminded the board that the need for a reserve policy was discussed last October. At that time, the board agreed that Dr. Roberts, Cara Pavlicek, Dr. Isoye and President Felton would review the policy.

It was reported that Cara Pavlicek, and Dr. Roberts discussed the need and are comfortable keeping the money in the designated accounts; tracking it as it is spend. It was recommended that the reserve not contain more than three months (11 percent, roughly \$67,000) of operating expense, and the abundance "opportunity fund" should be held by the governing body (District 97). It was agreed that a proposal would be brought back to the group for prior approval before the larger fund balance could be spent. Additionally, it was suggested that if a large surplus existed, the administrator could abate the bodies bill for the future year.

Discussion took place regarding the funds and why a surplus exists. The board was reminded that a lot had to do with timing, some of the money was abated and some of the staff that was allocated for was not hired until later in the year.

This initiative will be reviewed by Dr. Roberts, Dr. Isoye, Cara Pavlicek and Carolyn Newberry Schwartz and a draft will be created for the May meeting.

PRESENTATION OF THE 2015-16 DRAFT BUDGET

Dave Weindling shared the proposed budget and reported that the Collaboration is working on raising money from other sources. The possibility of grants and gifts were discussed. It was noted that the budget will be adopted in June.

REVIEW OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT – CONSIDER AMENDMENTS OR SIDE LIST OF ITEMS THAT MAY NEED GUIDELINES

The Intergovernmental Agreement was reviewed and discussed. The need to discuss a mechanism for expansion was shared and it was recommended that this topic be revisited annually.

It was reported that District 90 is supportive, but not ready to participate. Additionally, there has been no sign of support from the Village of River Forest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On February 13, 2015, District 97, along with District 200, submitted a proposal to the Triple I Conference to lead a panel on how to form an Early Childhood Collaboration. If accepted, the presentation would be held in November.

The guest speaker at the recent ED-RED dinner was Diana Rauner who spoke on the importance of K-12 education, and encouraged early childhood support. It was suggested that Oak Park is doing most of what she recommended.

The board was reminded that new school boards are seated in May, 2015 and the changes could impact the makeup of this board. It was noted that this will be the first time that the ECC IGA Governing Board will be crossing an election cycle. Concern was shared that these changes could impact this board as new officers are elected in May and seated in September.

Training was recommended for the new board members, and a more detailed annual meeting was suggested. It was suggested that this process be considered every other November as an educational piece. Interest was expressed in ways to engage a new group of members in the program that they did not create.

PLANNING FOR AGENDA

The May 6, 2015 agenda was considered and recommendations were made.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

SUBMITTED AND RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF:

Sheryl Marinier
Secretary to the District 97 Board of Education
Collaboration for Early Childhood – Intergovernmental Agreement – Governing Board – Recording Secretary