

State Interagency Coordinating Council Meeting
Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network
6340 Flank Drive, Suite 600, Harrisburg, PA 17112
State ICC Email – pasicc@pattan.k12.pa.us

September 9, 2004

Minutes

Members in Attendance

Ms. Esther Beck	- Bureau of Special Education, PDE
Ms. Barbara Caboot	- Bureau of Family Health, DOH
Ms. Maureen Cronin	- Office of Mental Retardation, DPW
Ms. Penny Henry	- Capital Area Head Start
Ms. Sarah Holland	- SICCC Co-Chairperson/Parent
Dr. Louise Kaczmarek	- University of Pittsburgh, Personnel Preparation (via videoconference)
Dr. Janice Matthew	- SICCC Co-Chairperson - Pittsburgh School District (via videoconference)
Dr. Joseph Mickley	- PAIU – IU 20
Dr. Trena Pelham	- American Academy of Pediatrics
Mr. Paul Stengle	- Provider/Montgomery County ARC
Ms. Sheila Theodorou	- MH/MR Administrators Association
Ms. Stacey Williams	- Parent

Members Absent

Ms. Sherry Byrne	- Parent
Ms. Martine DiLorenzo	- Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council
Mr. Scott Johnson	- Senate of Pennsylvania

Guests

Ms. Andrea Algatt	- OMR/DPW
Ms. Christine Moody	- Western PA School for the Deaf/Parent Information Program
Mr. Greg Bitler	- DOH – SE District
Mr. William Jefferson	- Schreiber Pediatric Rehab - Lancaster
Ms. Lisa Chiarello	- Drexel University
Ms. Carol Lauber	- PICC/Childlink
Ms. Shirley Keith Knox	- Dauphin MH/MR
Ms. Sharon Grady	- York/Adams MH/MR
Ms. Chris Butts	- SAM, Schuylkill County
Ms. Ana Farr	- Centre County MH/MR
Ms. Jane L. Resh	- Family-Child Resources, York
Ms. Ginny Duncan	- Parent Education Network
Mr. Joe Caracci	- WIPA School for the Deaf
Ms. Lisa Davis	- Cumberland/Perry MH/MR
Ms. Denise Bennett	- PA DOH
Ms. Mary Anketell	- EITA/PaTTAN
Ms. Kim Koteles	- OMR/DPW
Ms. Janice Eastburn-Bloom	- Beginnings, Inc. Johnstown
Ms. Vickie Amos	- Washington County MH/MR
Ms. Monica Brooks	- UCP SW PA
Ms. Gail Stredny	- Luzerne/Wyoming Co. EI Unit
Mr. Chris Loughner	- Westmoreland MH/MR
Ms. Cindy Line	- Danville Child Development Center
Mr. Connell O'Brien	- PC PA
Ms. Michele Huntsman	- Early Intervention Technical Assistance

The September meeting of the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) for Early Intervention was held at the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), 6340 Flank Drive, Suite 600, Harrisburg, PA. The meeting convened at 11:15 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Sarah Holland Chaired the SICC Meeting. She welcomed council members and audience participants. Ms. Holland welcomed Dr. Jan Matthew and Dr. Louise Kaczmarek who were participating via videoconference from Pittsburgh. Introductions were made.

Minutes – June 3, 2004

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2004 SICC meeting was made by Ms. Esther Beck and seconded by Mr. Paul Stengle.

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Ms. Andrea Algatt received an email asking that a correction be announced regarding the April 1, 2004 minutes. Ms. Algatt read the following:

Regarding changes to Supports Coordination in Philadelphia it was reported that SPIN was one of the new entities. That is incorrect. The new entity is Quality Progressions, and the executive director is a former SPIN employee. The other new entity is Partnership for Community Supports and is headed by Carol Frangicetto, a former employee of PATH.

Presentation

The MisMeasure of Young Children

Dr. Stephen Bagnato

Dr. Louise Kaczmarek introduced Dr. Stephen Bagnato. Dr. Bagnato is a national figure in the early intervention field on assessment practices and program evaluation and has published numerous books and articles relating to these areas. He is presently a psychologist at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, is a member of the University, Community, Leaders and Individuals with Disabilities (UCLID) faculty at the University of Pittsburgh, and runs the Early Childhood Partnerships program through the University of Pittsburgh and through Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Bagnato thanked Dr. Kaczmarek for the great introduction and also thanked the SICC, Ms. Maureen Cronin, and Ms. Deb Daulton for the opportunity to present to the SICC.

Dr. Bagnato gave a very informative presentation on what he and his colleague Dr. Jack Neisworth call *The MisMeasure of Young Children: The Authentic Assessment Alternative*.

Dr. Bagnato talked about why changes are needed in early childhood assessment, and the idea that assessments in general are conducted outside the child's natural environment. He said there is a failure of conventional assessment practices regarding evaluation to link with interventions, standards, outcomes, and to look ahead. He said we also fail to include parents as partners within the assessment process. Typically, assessment methods require a stranger (psychologist, speech language pathologist, teacher, or service coordinator) to come in and do an evaluation when they do not know the child and they do not know the circumstances. This creates a misalignment between the child and the situation. The point is that misrepresenting children through mismeasuring them denies kids their rights to beneficial expectations and opportunities.

Dr. Bagnato pointed out that in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) it says that "*a child's eligibility for early intervention shall be determined through a functional assessment conducted in the child's natural environment*". That is what is required and that is the point that Dr. Bagnato and Dr. Neisworth have made in the article. Dr. Bagnato said the title was borrowed from Stephen J. Gould who wrote the *Mismeasure of Man*.

Dr. Bagnato talked about why young infants, toddlers, and preschoolers are assessed and said that within early intervention four assessment purposes are recognized. They include screening and eligibility determination, individualized program planning, child progress monitoring, and program evaluation. Dr. Bagnato explained the four purposes.

Dr. Bagnato talked about authentic measurement, which means they do not rely on strangers to do the evaluation, they rely on the child's primary caregivers. The primary caregiver could be the teacher, parents, or team members who are familiar people in the child's life. The assessment is done in the child's natural circumstances (home, early care and education program, head start program, or the inclusive program that is both early intervention and head start). They also rely on caregivers to collect the data and use curriculum based measures that are related to the standards and related to the program.

Dr. Bagnato said that Universal Design are measures that allow us to make accommodations for kids with disabilities. They assess, the child gets across the room instead of the child walks across the room. It is a functional approach rather than an approach which only samples something that many kids can not do. The child uses words to communicate, versus communicates, whether it is through emotional behavior, vocalizations, or gestures. An example of this would be the California Department of Education is funding what they call Desired Results Developmental Profile, which is an arrangement that includes field tested adaptations in a statewide assessment. We need to focus on comparing kids to themselves and not compare them to kids who are unlike them in many ways.

Dr. Bagnato was asked to be part of Ms. Harriet Dichter's Early Learning Standards Task Force and said they now have Pennsylvania Standards that are coming out, and assessment is becoming part of this.

Dr. Bagnato reviewed eight Developmentally Appropriate Practice Assessment Standards:

1. Utility - usefulness for intervention
2. Acceptability - social worth and detection
3. Authenticity - natural methods and contexts
4. Equity - universal design/special accommodations
5. Sensitivity - fine content/ measurement gradations
6. Convergence - synthesis of ecological data
7. Collaboration - parent-professional teamwork
8. Congruence - disability design/evidence-base program evaluation

Dr. Bagnato talked about authentic assessment, which refers to the systematic collection of information about the naturally occurring behaviors of young children and families in their daily routines. The four major differences between authentic assessment and conventional testing include where it is done, what is assessed, how it is done, and who does it.

Dr. Bagnato gave an overview of Scaling Progress in Early Childhood Settings (SPECS) which is a project they have been working on since 1997 and has been centered in Allegheny County for children with special needs, children with behavior problems, and children growing up in very impoverished environments. One of the biggest funders for the project is the Heinz Endowments. The Heinz Endowments had a national competition for evaluating the outcomes of what was called the early childhood initiative in the Pittsburgh region and Dr. Bagnato said they were fortunate enough at Children's Hospital and at the University of Pittsburgh to get the evaluation grant for this.

Dr. Bagnato mentioned some of the projects the teams are working on. They are currently evaluating programs in Erie, York, and Lancaster that are funded by the Heinz Endowments. They are doing outcomes evaluation for Intermediate Unit 5 in Erie, have done outcomes evaluations for Head Start programs, and have worked in the state of Georgia. One of the programs that Dr. Bagnato highlighted was the Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, which is a birth to three service coordination group in Allegheny County.

Dr. Bagnato said that SPECS uses a management information based system that uses a software package called Our Client for Children. The software records client management system that includes the measurements on the computer that teachers, service coordinators, and parents can use. They are linked with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards, Head Start, DEC, etc. It is ongoing feedback for early learning plans and focuses on a variety of different features. There are nearly 4,000 children in the early childhood initiatives across Pennsylvania.

Dr. Bagnato showed different graphs and charts to illustrate how the system works. He said that the computer program is based on assessments by parents, teachers, and team members every September, January, and May. Dr. Bagnato talked about the developmental observations checklist system, which is a normative measure that meets the eight standards talked about earlier and allows them to record natural child behavior in everyday settings and routines. They do ongoing assessment and this becomes the link for parent and teacher communication and also for recording progress over time for kids.

Dr. Bagnato reported that they are currently in Phase II of the project, and said that a report on the first three years of the early childhood initiative can be found at www.uclid.org.

Dr. Bagnato has been working with Ms. Michele Myers-Cepicka, Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, and some of her staff on this project for four years. They were asked for the past three years by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to present to their data managers and talk about child outcomes and measurement. He said that it has not always been smooth, but has been a great process and they have mutually made changes together in the system so it fits birth to three. Dr. Bagnato said that Ms. Myers-Cepicka would say that her decision to do this was a proactive response to what OSEP was asking for, and also what the OMR system was asking for in terms of evaluation across all public welfare programs.

Dr. Bagnato said it is a developmentally appropriate evaluation arrangement and is based on a portable lap top management information system and every service coordinator has the assessment framework on their lap top when they go out to the home, or community settings and the parents and professionals work together and do collaborative assessments on where the infant and toddler is, what the families needs are, and what the program will look like. Dr. Bagnato showed a chart of what the expected outcomes looked like for individual kids in general. He said this was collaboration between a variety of different individuals and there were about 1,400 children in the analysis.

Dr. Bagnato stated that the early intervention quality outcomes profile owes a lot to Ms. Myers Cepicka and her staff. He said they asked a focus group made up of 500 community people from Allegheny County that included parents, paraprofessionals, community partners, staff, and therapists to help them determine how they knew her program was doing a good job for them. The group came up with 300 outcome statements that characterized how they would know that the Alliance for Infants and Toddlers was doing a good job. The group narrowed that down to 25 outcome statements that are linked to the mission of the program. They now have a good evaluation system and a way to collaboratively characterize child status and progress, and family status and progress. They also have a record of the program and can relate the program to family and child factors, and good evaluators can help do regression analysis.

Dr. Bagnato talked about guidelines for the right measure of children. The concepts include, real situations give you the best results, assessment requires teamwork, choose materials that link to intervention outcomes so it is the right tool for the right job, assessment is decision making, and in the end tests do not make the decisions, people make the decisions so there needs to be friendly formats that give information that allows them to make informed decisions.

In closing, Dr. Bagnato said they will be looking at these methods and strategies and will work with the American Academy of Pediatrics, and other states, as well as Pennsylvania in looking at the state standards as they relate to eligibility determination and evaluation of outcomes.

Dr. Bagnato answered questions from SICC members and audience participants.

Ms. Holland thanked Dr. Bagnato for his informative presentation.

State Interagency Report

State Departments, Early Intervention Technical Assistance (PaTTAN), and SICC Subcommittee Combined Report

A State Interagency Report was provided.

Department of Education

Ms. Esther Beck

Ms. Esther Beck announced that she was recently appointed Division Chief. She said that even though her duties and responsibilities have broadened, she will be able to fulfill the duties and obligations to the field and to the children and their families with special needs three through five, and work cooperatively with everyone.

Ms. Beck reported that she and Ms. Denise Kalp participated in conference calls where they heard presentations from states that are looking into outcomes measures. She said they will begin working on pilot projects to develop outcomes measures so they can have something by the end of this fiscal year. The states that presented during the conference calls will be presenting at the upcoming DEC conference.

Ms. Beck said that the aggregate number of children served three through five was 35,758 children, which is a sizable increase over the number last year. She said that for state funding they will be asked to produce information that shows results. Ms. Beck said that they have Ladders to Literacy outcomes information, and Sitewide Effective Behavioral Supports data which they will be using to present at the state level.

Ms. Beck reported that clarification has been received regarding transportation requirements for children who are going to Head Start. She said that if Mutually Agreed Upon Written Arrangement (MAWA) agency children are being transported to a Head Start program they are not required to meet the regulations of Head Start regarding transportation.

Ms. Beck announced staff additions to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Ms. Sue Mitchell is now an Advisor in Early Childhood at the Department of Education. Ms. Mitchell was most recently the Head Start Coordinator for the Tri-County area. Ms. Harriet Dichter is the Co-Director of the Office of Policy.

Ms. Beck announced that there are vacancies in the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) and asked those interested and qualified under Civil Service rules to go to the website to check the openings and to make application.

Department of Public Welfare

Ms. Maureen Cronin

Ms. Maureen Cronin reported that Secretary Estelle Richman recently announced a new office within the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) called the Office of Child Development, and Ms. Harriet Dichter has been named Deputy Secretary. Ms. Dichter has a dual role with DPW and PDE. The two Departments are being linked to ensure coordinated leadership on children's issues and to raise the priority level concerning issues of child development, early care and education. Ms. Cronin said they will keep the State ICC informed of any changes that take place regarding the new Office of Child Development and how early intervention relates to it.

Mr. Paul Stengle made a motion that the SICC send a letter to Secretary Estelle Richman suggesting that the SICC would like to give input on how early intervention in the Office of Mental Retardation (OMR) would relate to the new Office of Child Development. Ms. Sheila Theodorou seconded the motion.

The motion was approved. Ms. Maureen Cronin and Ms. Esther Beck abstained.

Ms. Cronin stated that OMR is thrilled that Ms. Esther Beck has been appointed Division Chief. She said they look forward to working with Ms. Beck, and that it will be nice to have continuity.

Department of Health

Ms. Barbara Caboot

Ms. Barbara Caboot had nothing additional to add to the written report that was provided.

Action Items

Dr. Jan Matthew discussed the list of Action Items. It was decided that the SICC will look at the Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) notebook during the October SICC retreat.

A letter and survey regarding Interagency Agreements will be mailed to LICCs in October.

Dr. Louise Kaczmarek's committee will continue to discuss the shortage of speech and language therapists.

No information was available regarding loan forgiveness for those who teach in the field of early intervention.

A card was sent on behalf of the SICC to Dr. Linda Rhen congratulating her on her new position.

Early Intervention Technical Assistance

Ms. Mary Anketell

Ms. Mary Anketell reported that the Autism Institute was held in August and was very successful. There were over 1,500 people in attendance, and one third of the attendees were parents with young children.

SICC Committee Updates

Continuous Quality Improvement and Outcome Measurement – Mr. Paul Stengle

Mr. Paul Stengle stated that the committee met prior to the SICC meeting and they continue to monitor a number of issues. He said they reviewed preliminary drafts of an early intervention and quality improvement process compliance survey and that it talked about outcomes and how the state is going to monitor the counties. Mr. Stengle said they are extremely impressed and commend the Department for their hard work. He said it will make the process a lot better than it exists today.

The committee continues to monitor child find and they are also trying to monitor federal initiatives on outcome measures and look at whether they should make recommendations to the Departments.

Ms. Stengle reported that Ms. Esther Beck agreed to serve on the committee in place of Dr. Rick Price.

Mr. Stengle asked the Chair about the process for adding new committee members. It was decided this item will be discussed during the SICC retreat. Mr. Stengle said he wanted to add two new members to the committee. Ms. Holland approved the new members.

Dr. Matthew talked about the committee report from the Pennsylvania Autism Task Force. She said it is something that Mr. Stengle's committee should look at. Dr. Matthew will disseminate the report to committee members and they will meet prior to the October SICC meeting to discuss it.

Professional Development and Quality Personnel – Dr. Louise Kaczmarek

Dr. Louise Kaczmarek said that her committee will be meeting monthly via listserv. They have designated one week of every month to meet and during the months when there is a SICC meeting they will meet the Monday after for one week so that committee members will have a chance to comment and move forward on various items. Dr. Kaczmarek said the committee will try it and see how it works and will report back to the SICC at the October meeting.

Ms. Andrea Algatt said that letters were sent to Dr. Linda Rhen, Ms. Kelly Goshen, Ms. Barbara Boltz, and Ms. Tracey Khalife thanking them for being part of the SICC. Letters were also sent to the Mr. Robert Frein, Office of Income Maintenance, Ms. Julie Barley, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, and Ms. Sue Willis, Early Learning Team, thanking them for presenting at the June SICC meeting.

Discussion occurred regarding the SICC Newsletter timeline and when topics are chosen. It was decided this topic will be discussed during the retreat in October.

SICC Retreat

Discussion occurred regarding the SICC retreat. The retreat will begin with the SICC meeting on Thursday, October 7 beginning at 1:00 p.m. The meeting and retreat will be held at the Allenberry in Boiling Springs.

Legislative Update

Mr. Scott Johnson

There was no legislative update.

State ICC Roundtable

Dr. Trena Pelham said she recently talked to Ms. Christine Rouse, Executive Director of Kids R Kids, which is an organization that helps people to understand that kids are kids. The organization will be sponsoring the National Theater Workshop of the Handicapped (NTWH) "Acting Without Boundaries" workshop at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. For further information regarding Kids R Kids, contact Ms. Rouse at chriskidskids@aol.com.

Ms. Holland reported that there were two conferences held regarding Every Child Deserves A Home and Family. There will be a meeting held for the conference participants to plan next steps to advance the recommendations that were developed during the Pittsburgh and Philadelphia conferences. The meeting will be held via video conference on Friday, October 1 from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the PaTTAN offices in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and King of Prussia. Registration information can be found at www.pattan.k12.pa.us.

Ms. Stacey Williams stated that she was concerned about not having information regarding available services for parents at the health clinic, WIC office, housing authority, and social security office in her area. She said there is no information for families in these places and thinks it would be a good idea to put something together to get the awareness out.

A lengthy discussion occurred regarding how information is disseminated in different areas. Several ideas were discussed, including a statewide television spot and using local newspapers as a way to get a consistent message out to families. The topic will be discussed further during the SICC retreat.

Ms. Esther Beck reported that she received information from the Delaware Valley Council for Early Care and Learning that they are hosting a *10th Annual Champions for Young Children* event on Thursday, October 21, 2004. The Council will present a "Best Employer for Working Parents" award to the Chester County Intermediate Unit and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Stan and Jan Berenstain, authors of the Berenstain Bears books, will be presented the Champions for Young Children award.

Mr. Paul Stengle stated that there will be a rally on October 13 at the state capitol beginning at 11:00 a.m. regarding the waiting list and a permanent cost of living increase for community based services. The rally is being sponsored by the Pennsylvania ARC, the Pennsylvania Association of Rehabilitation Services, and other provider associations supporting the initiative.

Open Forum

An audience participant asked if anyone has had success in applying for a waiver to hire early interventionists that do not have the required one year experience working with kids with special needs. Another audience participant stated that they did apply for and receive the waiver. Ms. Cronin said that counties can request a waiver and that the requests are reviewed on an individual basis.

An audience participant asked for further clarification regarding submitting local interagency agreements. Dr. Matthew said all of the information will be provided in the letter that will go out to LICCs in October.

An audience participant wanted to let folks know that there will be a Public Health Institute held in Philadelphia October 12-15, 2004. The institute will be a joint venture between the State Health Department and the Pennsylvania Public Health Association. For more information visit the Department of Health website at www.health.state.pa.us.

An audience participant announced that there will be a conference on collaboration between the medical and early intervention community on Saturday, October 23, 2004. If interested, contact Amy Lynch in the Occupational Therapy Department at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia 215-590-1000.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Stacey Williams and seconded by Ms. Sheila Theodorou. The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectively Submitted by:

Michele Huntsman
Michele Huntsman