

SICC MEETING MINUTES

Truman Building, Room 400

January 9, 2009

Members Present

Pam Thomas
Tec Chapman
Molly White
Donna Cash
Cori Tharp
Wendy Witcig

Joyce Sims
Leslie Elpers
Cindy Wilkinson
Kathy Daulton
John Heskett
Carolyn Stemmons

Judith Muck
*Melissa DeStefano -
representing Sen. Scott
Rupp*

Members Not Present

Carissa Mattern

Becky Houf

Kathy Fuger

DESE Staff Present

Dale Carlson
CJ Hubbard
Michele Schall

Stacey Ismail
Charla Myers
Marcy Morrison

Judy Goans

To review copies of handouts referenced in the minutes below, go the following website: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/SICCpage.html> and click on “Handouts” for the January 9, 2009 meeting.

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions – Wendy Witcig brought the meeting to order at 8:35 and welcomed everyone. Pam Thomas was introduced as the new Early Intervention Services Coordinator for DESE and Cori Tharp was recognized as the new parent member on the council.

Approval of the SICC Minutes – Wendy Witcig asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 2008 meeting. Tec Chapman made a motion to approve the minutes and Molly White seconded the motion. Motion passed and the October 2008 meeting minutes were approved.

Early Childhood conference in Washington, DC – The Early Childhood conference held in Washington, DC in December was attended by Wendy Witcig, Carissa Mattern, Pam Thomas, CJ Hubbard, and Pam Schneeflock. Wendy expressed that it was a great conference, especially for those in a new position. The conference included sessions for parents, SICC members, and state staff. Some ideas from the conference will be seen today including the movie that will be shown later, *Including Samuel*. The group was also able to meet and network with people from other states. CJ presented at the conference on Improvement Monitoring, Accountability, and Compliance System (IMACS). Wendy distributed materials she received at the conference including training information and information on future conferences. Wendy said that it was

interesting to hear how other SICC's operate and function in different states and how we might start using subcommittees to connect the SICC with the RICCs.

Department of Insurance (DOI) report – Molly White distributed a draft report from DOI covering calendar year 2008. DOI is required to submit this report on First Steps to the Missouri General Assembly by January 30, 2009 for the previous program year. The vast majority of the data in the report comes from DESE. Molly stated that a change that seems to be needed is that the current law doesn't adequately address the practice that insurance carriers who choose direct claim billing to meet their obligation and the direct billing piece is costly to DESE. Another area of concern is the cap on the number of therapy sessions allowed in a given calendar year by some insurance companies. Families are concerned that if their sessions are used to cover First Steps services, no further sessions will remain under their insurance policy for sessions needed to meet non-First Step therapy needs. She also said that DOI would suggest that the language that defines which insurance companies have to comply with the law and which ones do not should be cleaned up with terms that are more defined. Molly asked the members to notify her if they see something in the report that they do not agree with. This is a topic that might go to an SICC subcommittee for more investigation.

Compliance Update – Annual Performance Report (APR) – CJ Hubbard presented the APR to the SICC. This report is required to be submitted annually to the Office of Special Education Programs. The APR is based on the State Performance Plan (SPP), which is a 5 year plan. During the October SICC meeting Mary Corey and CJ presented some of the data from each one of these indicators so that the SICC members would have a preview of the data that DESE would be reporting on in January 2009. DESE also e-mailed the SICC members a copy of the draft APR for review prior to this meeting. CJ reported that the state did not have any slippages in numbers on the APR this year and, for the most part, there was improvement across the board. DESE is also going to be asking the SICC to accept this APR as its annual report to the governor and to the United States Secretary of Education.

CJ presented a PowerPoint on the APR discussing several of the indicators with the SICC. CJ said that Indicator 4, which is the family survey, was something that the SICC had discussed in the past regarding the wording of question 11. The new family survey that will go out this spring will change the wording in question 11 from *procedural safeguards* to *parental rights*. This change in wording might improve our data since some parents might not have understood the wording of this question. A discussion was held regarding whether or not families understand their parental rights. The parents don't have to sign that they have received their parental rights but legally it is implied that they understand their rights when they take their copy. The service coordinators also go through the parental rights with the families. It was suggested that the service coordinator ask the family each time they visit them if they have any questions regarding their parental rights. The families are also given a copy of the parental rights if there is a change in services. It was suggested that a bullet-point statement be drafted to go out as supplement and a simplified version of the parental rights. It is a requirement that these parental rights are given to the families as they are written out. The SICC asked that CJ and Pam consider some modifications or steps that we could take to better understand this and bring back any ideas to the SICC.

CJ pointed out that the Indicator 7 data has changed because the 2006-07 data included all 10 SPOE offices but the 2007-08 data is only from 5 SPOE offices. The SICC suggested that this information should be noted on the APR.

DESE has developed this APR and worked on it through the entire year. The report was submitted to the North Central Regional Resource Center (NCRRC) and feedback was good. Margaret Strecker, who contracts with DESE, also looked at the APR and sent back her comments on it. We will be incorporating those comments into the APR and we also want to incorporate anything the SICC has to say.

Indicator 8 was discussed and the SICC asked if it would be helpful to have a focus group of parents who have gone through transition recently. The SICC would like to help parents who are transitioning from Part C to Part B with their perceived and actual concerns regarding the transition. It was suggested that a subcommittee be formed to connect the SICC and the RICC to help with the transition process.

The SICC congratulated DESE and the SPOE offices for showing the improvements which are evident by the report.

Wendy asked the SICC members if they would like to go ahead and make the recommendations and approvals to Indicator 7 and 8. Leslie Elpers made a motion to make the changes to the APR on Indicator 7 and Indicator 8 and Joyce Sims seconded the motion. Wendy asked for any discussion.

Indicator 7 will include a comment that the data has changed slightly as only 5 SPOE offices were monitored as opposed to 10 the previous year. Indicator 8 will include a comment that DESE has provided transition materials to parents in the form of a DVD and brochure. Wendy asked for a vote and all were in favor.

Wendy asked for a motion to approve, or accept, the APR as the SICC report to OSEP and the annual report to the governor. John Heskett made a motion to accept it and Carolyn Stemmons seconded the motion. All in favor with no one opposed.

Financial Report – Dale reported on the “A” report and stated that spending is on target for 2009 and First Steps is in pretty good shape financially. On the revenue portion DESE hasn’t indicated any drawdowns from family fees but will do that in January. DESE expects to drawdown about \$1.8 million. Both private insurance reimbursement and family cost participation are running slightly ahead of budgeted amounts. Preliminary December 1, 2008 child count has been added to the report showing an approximate 7% increase over 2007 (3,740 children). This increase corresponds with the child find data reported earlier in the APR update. Over all program expenditures and receipts are typical for this time of year with no surprises.

The “B” report reflects direct service expenditures by SPOE. The provider mileage reimbursement rate, as reflected here will increase (to \$.47 per mile) on July 1 so we can expect an increase in that budgeted item in FY 2010. FY 2009 mileage costs run about \$80,000 per month, based on the current mileage rate of \$.30 per mile. We are seeing program costs trend upward reflecting the effects of more kids and higher mileage/provider rates. Additional program costs will be seen in 2010 due to the rebid of all SPOE contracts which will become effective July 1, 2009. The average expenditure for direct services for the first 6 months of this fiscal year is \$1.9 million compared to \$1.6 million at this time last year. Direct service expenditures are on target with spending where DESE projected the program to be.

DESE has asked for a \$3.6 million core budget increase for FY 2010 to offset some of these planned cost increases. A member asked what is reflected in the expenditure item referred to as “off system costs”. Dale explained that these are charges for providers that had a problem with billing or interpreter charges that could not be processed through the normal CFO payment system and had to be processed offline. A member of the council asked if portions of the budget report could be provided to the committee in graph form. Dale stated that the information in these two reports is based on what the SICC wanted to see in previous years and that there is many varying types of data available in the two budget reports making a graph presentation very complex. Dale indicated that some budget data could be presented in graph format, if “annual trend data” was the goal as opposed to the current monthly update data. He requested that the committee evaluate the data shown on the existing “A” and “B” reports and tell him what specific information they would like to see graphed on an annual trend basis. A question was also asked if the budget report could be e-mailed to the SICC members so that they could review it and prepare questions prior to the meeting. Dale said the usual delay in preparing the report is due to

the timing of the SICC meeting in each month. If the meeting is early in the month, the most current data is often not available until the day prior to (and at times, the morning of) the SICC meeting.

Disclosure to the SICC of the Due Process Decision – CJ stated that in the January meeting announcement to the SICC members it included a link to the due process decision that had occurred last year for First Steps. These decisions must be disclosed to the SICC members each year. The website link has a copy of the decision with all the personally identifiable information removed. This decision has been adjudicated. There were 6 child complaints for Part C filed last year.

Routines Based Interview (RBI) Update – Charla Myers presented a PowerPoint and a 20 minute DVD clip regarding RBI. The SICC previously asked for more information on RBI.

The SICC members watched the DVD, *Including Samuel*, during their working lunch. This documentary examines the educational and social inclusion of youth with disabilities as a civil rights issue. More information on this DVD is available at the following website:

www.includingsamuel.com

Early Intervention (EI) Teams – Stacey presented a PowerPoint on Missouri's EI team model. The SICC members had asked at a previous meeting for more information on this subject and feedback from the SPOE offices who are using the model. The SPOE offices provided feedback as follows:

- Region 1 – Margaret Pickett responded that their office is not operating a pilot for EI Teams at this time.
- Region 2 – Howard Smith reported that their office does have a pilot with about 8 families participating. Their office has been holding monthly team meetings since August, with the exception of December. He stated that as a service coordinator he definitely sees the benefits of this program as the providers are able to meet and share information from home visits with each other. They have also been trying to implement the interviewing techniques from RBI.
- Region 3 - Karen Jacobi reported that their office has had 4 teams operating in a pilot program since May of 2008. The 4 teams are in different stages and meet monthly in various areas. These 4 teams are located on the west side of their region and they are looking at breaking down the east side of their region into 4 separate teams. The teaming is going well in their area and it builds mutual respect among providers and the SPOE office who are all working towards a common goal. The biggest obstacle in their area is they have very few independent providers as most providers are hospital based.
- Region 4 – Kathy Daulton shared that they chose to work in Buchanan County with the United Cerebral Palsy as they had all 4 disciplines under 1 agency. They initially picked 4 children to work with who they knew would be eligible but are now up to around 10 families. Other provider agencies have approached Kathy and are interested in the teaming issue.
- Region 5 – Jana Robinson reported that Region 5 will be setting up a team in Bates and Johnson County as soon as they complete their training with their area director. The providers that are in these areas are the only providers and they are already seeing most of the children in the area. Their office is trying to ease into the model but they are receiving positive responses from providers.

- Region 6 – Niki Clover reported that they have 1 team in Cole County that is progressing slowly with a couple of monthly meetings. They have been trying to identify the perfect family but have found they need to broaden their range.
- Region 7 – Sarah Parker reported that they don't have a functioning EI team at this point. Their office has identified the geographic areas they would like to try the teaming in and they will be meeting with Stacey and some of the provider to discuss.
- Region 8 – Jennifer Larson reported that each of their teams has between 10 and 20 kids. Their teams really enjoy the monthly meetings and the feedback from families has been positive.
- Region 9 – Heather Keith reported they have 2 teams that started in late spring of last year, one in Franklin County with 4 kids and one in Jefferson County with 7 kids. Both teams seem to be getting a good feel and meet monthly to figure out what is best for the families they are serving. They have enjoyed good feedback and the families indicated better progress with their children.
- Region 10 – Bethany Winschel reported they currently have 1 team and another that should be operational in the next month.

A question was asked as to how you participate in a team meeting if you haven't evaluated the child. Pam Thomas responded that you review the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and if service coordinators are writing quality IFSPs you can get an idea of what the child/family's daily routine is based on the outcomes and strategies. Teaming is not providing specific child services but about providing general strategies. As Charla mentioned with RBI, DESE is also taking the EI process very slowly as a state. The area directors have been observing the team meetings and reported it was great to see a group of people coming together and supporting each other. Part of the reason we are moving slowly is because we need more information and materials to inform the families. The area directors and Pam Thomas will be working together on materials to explain teaming to the families. DESE is also working with the Central Finance Office (CFO) to create a tab for these meetings that won't be imbedded in the IFSP.

Old Business – The members discussed the upcoming dates for the SICC meeting in 2009. The meetings dates for the rest of 2009 are as follows: April 3, 2009, July 17, 2009, and October 16, 2009.

A discussion was held regarding SICC subcommittees and it was decided that the SICC can establish subcommittees as they see fit. At one time there was an SICC subcommittee on policy making. Two other subcommittees that were mentioned were one for membership and one for program issues. Those who attended the Early Childhood Conference learned that other states use their working lunch as a time for subcommittee discussion and after lunch each committee returns and gives a brief report to the group. This would also give the RICC chairs time to talk amongst themselves and network. The working lunch would be extended to 11:45 to 1:00. Wendy stated that they also learned at the conference that a lot of other states struggle with finding parents on the SICC. Wendy stated that we are not out of compliance on our bylaws as the SICC has been working to remedy this problem. Wendy asked for a motion to create a program subcommittee for the SICC. Leslie Elpers made a motion and Donna Cash seconded the motion. All were in favor with no one opposed.

Member Issues – No member issues.

Wendy asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Donna Cash made a motion and Joyce Sims seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.