

SICC MEETING MINUTES

Videoconference

September 14, 2012

Members Present via Videoconference or Conference Call:

Pam Thomas
Steve Cramer
Julie LePage
Cindy Mueller
Rob Reichart

Angela Oesterly
Bruce Holt
Lisa Robbins
Wendy Witcig
Joyce Sims

Leslie Elpers
Stacey Owsley
Mike Abel

Members Not Present:

Amy Kessel

Cori Tharp

Marta Halter

DESE Staff Present:

Tina Lawson
Sarah Camp

Judy Goans
Michele Schall

Heather Crosby
Marcy Morrison

To review copies of handouts referenced in the minutes below, go to the following website: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/SICCpage.html> and click on “Handouts” for the September 14, 2012 meeting.

Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions – Wendy Witcig brought the meeting to order at 10:10 and introductions were made.

Approval of the SICC Minutes from April 2012 – Wendy asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the April 2012 meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Stacey Owsley and seconded by Rob Reichart. Wendy asked for any discussion. All were in favor with no one opposed. Motion passed.

Pam Thomas indicated that Tina Lawson, First Steps Area Director from the Northeast region, will be her new alternate to the SICC, replacing Stacey Ismail who recently resigned her position with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department).

Mission Moment – Tina Lawson, read a letter from a First Steps family expressing their appreciation for the help they received through the First Steps program.

Agency Updates – Wendy asked if any state agencies or council members had any critical updates to share with the SICC in light of the state budget that was passed in the last legislative session. Stacey Owsley shared with the council information on the most recent impact statement that the Missouri

Coordinating Board for Early Childhood (CBEC) released. The statement can be viewed at the following link: <http://dss.mo.gov/cbec/pdf/cbec-fact-sheet-2013.pdf>. Stacey also announced that the CBEC has a new acting chair, Jim Caccamo. The CBEC is working on recommendations from a work group regarding early childhood mental health that was approved at their last meeting in August. A public awareness campaign will be focusing on social and emotional development for children. Stacey indicated that it was in its very early stages, but it will be evolving and the SICC might be interested in hearing more about it at a future meeting. Dr. Patsy Cater is the chair of the Early Childhood Mental Health Committee workgroup.

DESE Updates

- **Financial Report** – Pam Thomas presented the council with the FY12 First Steps Monthly Expenditure/Revenue Tracking final report. The updated FY13 First Steps Monthly Expenditure/Revenue Tracking report will be presented at the November SICC meeting. The First Steps program requested and received an increase of \$2 million from the general revenue fund. The OA Cost Allocation under expenditures is the Office of Administration (OA) cost allocation which is an indirect cost for items such as budgeting and oversight. In regards to insurance, the Office of Special Education started tracking the private insurance and family fee revenues on a monthly basis so that from here on out the trend information will be available. Private insurance carriers have the ability to elect a percentage of their annual written premiums (bulk payment up to \$500,000) or submit direct claims to help pay for First Steps services. For FY13 no carriers have elected the bulk payment and only one carrier chose that option for FY12. This is not good news for the First Steps program because that means the program will be receiving much less than what was received in the past. The Office is considering recommendations on what to do about a decrease in funding from private insurance revenue. The Department of Insurance has been involved in conversations with the Office to look into options and what might be viable for the program. The Office is considering options to change the way the law is written. There are parent protections in the federal regulations that are not in the state law so those must be considered as well. At this point the Office is not making changes to provider service or mileage rates.
In regards to Medicaid, while the funding from direct claims this year (\$2.2 million) increased over last year (\$1.6 million), it is still under the projected amount of \$3 million for this fiscal year. Of note, there are more families in the First Steps program in the Medicaid system. The Department of Social Services is working with the Office to investigate denials and help First Steps maximize revenue from Medicaid direct claims. A question was asked regarding the November 2011 and February 2012 portions of the insurance lines on the spreadsheet, that the amounts didn't add up to the total. Pam will verify those amounts with funds office. If these amounts are changed and/or corrected, Pam will send the council members the link to the updated FY12 First Steps Monthly Expenditure/Revenue Tracking document that will be reposted on the First Steps website.
Note at the bottom of the FY12 First Steps Monthly Expenditure/Revenue Tracking report is information requested by the SICC showing the year to year number of children in the program and total cost per child. FY12 is the 5th year in a row with an increase in child count in the program. Over 10,000 children were referred to the program and over 5,000 have an IFSP. The total cost per child has gone up over the last few years, but the Office anticipates this amount will level off. Pam reminded the members that for the past two years the state has been delivering services under the traditional model and the teaming model.

Sequestration is another issue that the Office has been considering. The group discussed the potential impact of sequestration for the next fiscal year budget for federal programs. If sequestration occurs, it is projected that the Part C federal dollars would be about 8% less than expected. A comment was made that sequestration might be postponed if congress acts. Pam indicated that it could happen, but it hasn't happened yet and the Office is being proactive in considering what may occur. Representative Sue Allen informed the group that because of the number of new House of Representative members, due to elections and term limits, there is a need to educate these new representatives about the First Steps program. Wendy acknowledged that it had been discussed in the past how the SICC members can educate the legislature. Wendy will work with Pam to find out what role would be appropriate to provide that education to our legislative body. It was suggested that a small group of families discuss or meet with their local legislators. Pam said that in anticipation of needing information about First Steps, the Office has brochures and documents available to the public. The commissioner's office e-mailed an SICC annual report to all legislators earlier this spring and that can be done again next spring if needed. The Office is also working on putting together a 2012 report with data and stories from First Steps families that will be available in the fall. A copy of the report will be available at the November SICC meeting. The University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) has developed a family leadership network with a database. The database connects family leaders working in local communities across the state and it could be the voice for families with their local legislators. Some of this information was shared at our April SICC meeting by Sheli Reynolds, UMKC. Pam suggested that maybe the SICC should invite Sheli back for the November meeting and also encourage representatives from the RICCs to attend.

- **Review the proposed State Plan changes** – The proposed changes to the Part C State Plan were posted to the web on August 30, 2012. The Office will be accepting written public comments through October 29, with public hearings being held on October 10 and October 16. The Proposed Changes Chart was e-mailed for review prior to the SICC meeting and also available on the web. Pam reviewed the chart and everyone participating in the meeting was given the opportunity to comment as she went through the chart. A note about the regulations and the SICC, the new federal regulations do not prohibit a parent member of the SICC from being a provider as well. The proposed plan did clarify that the annual report submitted to the governor and the Office of Special Education (OSEP) is the APR report. A comment was made regarding the changes to the ABA Consultant under the personnel standards section and how it will limit the people who know about autism from working with the kids in First Steps. Pam reminded everyone that any comments regarding the ABA Consultant position, or any other items in the state plan, can be e-mailed to Idea.Comments@dese.mo.gov.

Task Force/Committee Reports

- **Bylaws- Discuss changes to the bylaws** – A motion was made by Cindy Mueller and seconded by Leslie Elpers to open up for discussion and review the two proposed bylaws changes. All were in favor of the discussion. One of the proposed bylaw changes clarifies the position for personnel preparation as the designated Center of Excellence, Education, Research and Service in the State of Missouri. This would formalize this position, which is currently held by Kathy Fuger with UMKC. The other proposed bylaw change was to allow a parent to be a provider as well. Those were the only two changes from the previous time the council met and the last conference call with the bylaws subcommittee. Wendy asked for any discussion regarding these two changes. A comment was made that in the past there was a conflict with an SICC parent member who

was a provider as well. The members of the council at that time felt that the member was speaking more from the provider perspective, rather than the parent perspective. A suggestion was made that maybe a conflict of interest statement would help to address the concern with the conflict of interest. It was suggested that the topic of the conflict of interest statement be discussed by the groups during the working lunch. Wendy asked for any other discussion to either of the changes proposed to the bylaws. With the meeting being held via videoconference and conference call Wendy asked that a roll call of members be used to obtain votes from everyone. All were in favor of the two bylaws changes with Leslie Elpers voting against. The motion passed and the proposed bylaw changes will go into effect. All groups discussed the changes to the state plan during the working lunch. Another topic for discussion during the working lunch would be the issue of alternates not being vetted through the governor's office. This is an issue more so for providers and parents, rather than the various state department representatives.

Working Lunch

Wendy asked for feedback from each group regarding the additional bylaw changes and/or SICC alternates after the working lunch. The Jefferson City group said that they had concerns with making potential members jump through more hoops when there has been so much discussion in the past about getting parents involved in particular. Joyce Sims in Springfield also agreed with the Jefferson City group said that she thinks we are just making more hoops for parents to jump through to be on the council. The Kansas City group talked about the down side of not using an alternate which would restrict the number of families that could be involved. Their group also suggested increasing the number of parent positions on the SICC. A comment was made that if we double number of members we may not get them all approved. Wendy stated she had a couple of conversations with Kim Gerlt, Boards and Commissions, regarding our pending appointments and reiterated to her that it is a federal requirement to have parents on the council. Wendy also explained that we have providers whose terms are expired and pending new appointments. Wendy created a document and sent it to Kim so she would be better able to see who is on the council and if their terms had expired. On the back side of the report Wendy inserted the federal regulations that the council must follow.

Pam indicated that the bylaws subcommittee might want to consider a few other items regarding the bylaws. On page two of the bylaws it talks about expanding membership, so it would be possible to increase the number of parents and providers on the SICC without requiring a change to the bylaws. As discussed earlier in the meeting, we will be changing the language for personnel preparation on number 4 of Article 4 of the bylaws. The subcommittee might want to consider changing the language on number 5 of Article 4. This was probably written when DMH provided some of the service coordination. Number 6 of Article 4 talks about a member from the lead agency responsible for preschool, but we don't have anyone on the SICC from the state Part B program. Also, under number 9 of Article 4, adding membership from Head Start or Early Head Start.

New Business

- **Election of SICC Co-Chairs** – Wendy asked Joyce Sims if she would consider serving as one of the SICC co-chairs. Joyce asked if Wendy had to give up the position of co-chair and Wendy said that it is elected annually, but that she has served in the position for two or three years. Joyce said that she would prefer to have someone else co-chair and she recommended that Wendy continue in the position. Wendy said that an effort needed to be made to get other

representation on the board. Also, the board needs to review the parent co-chair position on the board. Joyce Sims made a motion to nominate Wendy Witcig for the SICC co-chair position. Lisa Robbins seconded the motion. With the meeting being held via videoconference and conference call Wendy asked that a roll call of members be used to obtain votes from everyone. All were in favor with no one opposed. Motion passed. Joyce agreed to participate alongside Wendy this next year to familiarize herself with the role. The Office will include Joyce on correspondence to the current co-chairs.

- **Schedule SICC Meetings for 2013** – The SICC approved the following dates for SICC meetings in 2013:
 - January 11, 2013 – Videoconference/conference call
 - April 12, 2013 – Truman building – Room 400
 - September 13, 2013 – Videoconference/conference call
 - November 8, 2013 – Truman building – Room 400

Old Business

- **Membership** - Joyce inquired if the Office had received her reappointment from the governor's office. Pam indicated that at this time the Office has not received notification of her reappointment to the SICC.
- **Child Find** – It was suggested that at our next face to face meeting the SPOEs and the RICCs bring some of their child find materials to share their information with each other. Pam proposed that those activities could be presented at our next SICC meeting in November during the working lunch. The department is also working again with Philips and Associates on updating our statistical forecasting model. The results of that study will also be shared at the November SICC meeting.

Julie LePage, Department of Mental Health, shared copies of the Autism Spectrum Disorders Guide to Evidence-based Interventions with the members at the Jefferson City location. She will bring more copies to the November meeting and they are also available to order online for free.

Wendy asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Cindy Mueller made a motion and Julie LePage seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15.