

## MEETING NOTES/MINUTES

September 25th, 2014

Start Time: [10:11 am CST]

End Time: [12:05 pm CST]

### Committee Members Present

Rickey Berry, Vickey Berryman, Ricky Boggan, Margarette Davenport, Louise Davis, Juanita Johnson, Jenny Kern, April May, Jennifer McNeal, Lora Mederos, Nita Norphlet-Thompson, Mimmo Parisi, Laurie Smith, Holly Spivey, Danny Spreitler, Jennie Sturgis, Nathan Oakley (for Carey Wright)

### Others Present

Tate Gould, Kelsey Risman, Debbie Ellis

### Motions Passed

1. Ricky Berry motioned to approve the minutes from the last SECAC board meeting. Margarette Davenport seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the motion.

### Meeting Notes

Ricky Boggan called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m.

Ricky Berry motioned to approve the minutes from the last SECAC board meeting. Margarette Davenport seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved the motion.

Dr. Louise Davis shared the progress of the Professional Development and Workforce Development Committee. She said the committee has ironed out its state system objectives and developed committee-specific objectives.

Nita Norphlet-Thompson shared the progress of the Engagement and Partnerships Committee. She cited the state system objectives developed by the committee. She discussed an early care and learning portal that would help people find licensing information. She said the committee would do a listening tour to address concerns about access and content. Vickey Berryman said MSDH is working on a website for licensure. Thompson added that the portal would feature a question/request system that can create FAQs and also link to more detailed information at agency websites.

Dr. Mimmo Parisi shared the progress of the Data System Committee. He cited the state system and committee objectives developed by the committee and stated the importance of having a clear goal for the data. He also presented the early childcare delivery system as it looks now as identified by the Technical Management Subcommittee. He said the committee will continue to work on defining the services of service providers so that duplication can be avoided. He also said the committee will identify any missing services from the list. Dr. Louise Davis clarified that Extension Service is now the Early Years Network and provides services to providers, Head Start, school districts, and families/individuals.

Dr. Laurie Smith shared the committee objectives since Dr. Carey Wright and Johnny Franklin, chair and co-chair of the Assessment Committee, were not in attendance. Dr. Smith said a report can be given at the next SECAC meeting when preliminary data are in.

Danny Spreitler shared the progress of the QRS Committee. He said the committee meetings have been listening meetings to engage childcare providers to look at the present QRS system and what the future may hold. He said providers would like to see more attention to childcare outcomes, which isn't a focus of the current system.

April May shared the progress of the Standards Committee. She cited the state system and committee objectives. Dr. Smith asked if a suggestion has come up for a survey of providers to indicate who is following standards. May said no but that a survey is a good idea. Jennie Sturgis said most childcare centers don't have access to the new standards. Dr. Parisi asked how better access could be accomplished. Sturgis said one physical copy would be good. Mississippi Department of Education representative Nathan Oakley said MDE needs the addresses of all providers to mail the standards. Oakley added that the guidelines are being revised. Sturgis said access to Ages & Stages would be great, too. Dr. Parisi asked about professional development to understand these standards and ideas. Sturgis said a lot of knowledge falls through the cracks due to lack of access. Juanita Johnson said the Jackson school district's PK religiously follows the standards, but an issue arises when the district gets a kid from a private center that doesn't follow the same standards. She said the kid must start over rather than advance. Dr. Davis said that standards were once printed out and given out during training. She said her organization would be willing to hand out the standards at training but added that the printing costs would be significant. Jenny Kern said handing out the standards is a good idea, but she said providers should also be encouraged to get training, too. Kern added that there are a lot of different assessments out there, so one must be aware of whether the assessments one uses will line up with kindergarten readiness. Dr. Parisi suggests a task force to investigate these issues and bring forward recommendations to the board in order to minimize things falling between the cracks. Davenport said time can be an issue for providers. In response to this concern, Johnson said lead teachers could act as the primary connection between trainers and classrooms. Boggan suggested putting together a proposed list of members of the task force that will be voted on in the next SECAC meeting.

Dr. Tate Gould said state system objectives are 65 percent complete, committee objectives are 85 percent complete, and deliverables are 50 percent complete. He added that deliverables will be met over the next 12 months. Dr. Gould said most of the updates to the SECAC website have been completed and asked about FAQs that can be added. Dr. Parisi suggested a point of contact for this idea.

Dr. Smith discussed potential locations for future SECAC meetings. Norphlet-Thompson said weather should be considered for different meetings. Dr. Smith asked about upcoming events that SECAC can attend. May mentioned the Early Childhood Conference Oct. 8-10 in Hattiesburg and 10-year anniversary of Excel by 5 in Jackson on Oct. 8.

Dr. Parisi said SECAC should map out the resources that each university provides. Boggan suggested a task force for this effort.

Audience members responded positively to the Early Childcare Spotlight idea mentioned by Dr. Smith. Dr. Smith said the plan is to go forward with the idea.

Oakley presented details on a development grant that, if awarded, would expand Mississippi's public PK. He requested a letter of support from SECAC. Spreitler said since there was no item on the SECAC meeting agenda about this letter of support, it would be out of line to do a vote on it. Boggan said Spreitler's point of order was well taken and that SECAC members would need a draft of the report/application to give a response.

Debbie Ellis, vice president of the Mississippi Association of Licensed Child Care Providers, posed a series of questions to Oakley. (Editor's Note: What follows is a selection of the most pertinent questions and comments.)

"Is it true the Mississippi Department of Education contracted with Rachel Canter and Mississippi First to develop and write the pre-k grant proposal?" Ellis asked. Oakley said yes.

Ellis added: "Let me share remarks Rachel Canter included in a Legislative Brief to legislators before writing the Early Learning Collaborative Act:

'According to information in the state's Race-to-the-Top Early Learning Challenge Fund proposal, most rated centers scored below 3 with a plurality scoring 1, the lowest score. These results indicate that the private childcare market does not have the capacity to serve as a pre-k substitute without significant quality improvements.'"

"Did you publish notice of these meetings on your list serve?" Ellis asked. Oakley said it was a quick turnaround. Ellis then asked, "How many privately licensed child care programs are participating and included in the Pre-K Collaborative? Two?"

"What is meant by 'ready now,' 'high-quality from Day 1'?" Ellis asked. Oakley referred to two slides of his presentation regarding quality. Ellis said it doesn't address QRS. Oakley said that is correct and added that classroom-measure quality and teach-child interaction would be included.

"So, private childcare will now have two sets of rules and criteria to meet when qualifying?" Ellis asked. Oakley said they would have to follow the requirements of the grant.

Ellis said: "Lynn Darling, Director of the Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute – now a professor at Ole Miss – stated the following to the Hechinger Report: 'There's a concern that if we fund pre-k, then a lot of privately owned child care centers will go out of business. It's expensive to run infant and toddler classrooms – you need a 3- and 4-year-old classroom to pay the bills – so it would be difficult for a private childcare center to remain in business just serving infants and toddlers.'"

Ellis then asked if MDE has time to do an economic impact study on what the removal of 3,100 children would do to privately owned businesses, based on Darling's words? Oakley said not at this time.

Dr. Parisi asked for a way to facilitate this process of questioning. Berry said people can send the questions to the chair. Dr. Parisi said MDE could provide answers to the chair. Boggan agreed.

Boggan adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.