

SECAC Council Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 30, 2015, 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Jackson, Mississippi

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Berry, Vickey Berryman, Ricky Boggan, Louise Davis, Jenny Kern, April May, Jennifer McNeal, Mimmo Parisi, Sandra Parks, Tina Routh, Laurie Smith, Jennie Sturgis, Rhea Williams-Bishop, Carolyn Willis

OTHERS PRESENT

Kim Benton, Laura Dickson, Monica May, Lydia Bethay, Eileen Beazley

MEETING OBJECTIVES

1. Approval of Minutes
 2. Committee Updates
 3. Public/Additional Comments
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MINUTES

Approval of Minutes

Sandra Parks motioned to approve the minutes. Vickey Berryman seconded the motion. The council unanimously passed the motion.

Committee Progress Update

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment: Review of the previous Kindergarten presentation was discussed. April May said the committee would meet after the post-assessment results.

Professional Development and Workforce: Dr. Louise Davis said the committee hasn't met since the last SECAC meeting. She said one goal of the committee is trying to look at articulation between technical and academic degrees.

Standards Committee: April May said the committee has completed the questions it will use for the survey to childhood providers. NSPARC is developing the survey with the committee. May said the survey will primarily be done by telephone but that paper and electronic versions of the survey will be used if necessary. She said a pilot survey would be implemented first and that the survey is expected to be finished by June. She said the committee has collected checklists to see how standards are being met in childcare centers. She said the committee will be meeting in May in Stoneville. Rhea Williams-Bishop said the committee can send the survey to SECAC members in case they have

anything they would like to add to it. Dr. Smith mentioned teacher turnover as an important potential topic in the survey. May said Building Blocks centers have had high turnover. Dr. Smith asked Dr. Kim Benton how APA would accept comments about the standards. Dr. Benton said the document can be found on the MDE website. Dr. Benton emphasized the importance of emailing comments rather than calling on the phone to give comments. Dr. Benton said the deadline for comments is June 16.

Data System: Dr. Parisi drew the board's attention to the model of the early childhood system as it stands. The committee surveyed all the programs throughout the state and found 48 distinct programs in early childhood. The committee voted for the framework to follow the organization of three major areas: early learning and development, family and leadership, and health. The programs have been organized under these three areas in the proposed model. Dr. Parisi said an important question that has come out of this process is how do agencies govern programs? Sandra Parks said this is a great vision.

Dr. Parisi motioned to accept the committee's proposed framework (early learning and development, family and leadership, and health) for the early childhood system in Mississippi. Tina Routh seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Dr. Parisi discussed the SLDS grant that was addressed in the data committee's last meeting. He said the next round of SLDS funding allows states to choose early childhood as an area of focus. He said the data committee made the recommendation to make the SLDS goal to accomplish the state system objectives of the SECAC Data Committee. Willis asked for clarification on the funding agent of the grant. Dr. Parisi said the U.S. Department of Education will be the funding agent. Sandra Parks said this is a great idea and that she knows how expensive these data systems can be. Dr. Parisi said the budget would be scaled to the scope of the project. Berry asked what the council could provide for this grant effort, other than a letter of support. Dr. Parisi said he wants to make sure that this grant is supported statewide and not just coming from an individual agency. Dr. Smith and Chair Ricky Boggan suggested an overview of the grant be presented to SECAC; the council members can consider a letter of recommendation at the next meeting.

Quality Rating Standards: Dr. Smith gave the update. She said she went to the McComb listening session for QRS. She said it was very well attended and a lot of input was provided. She said there is still confusion about the delineations between quality systems. Many providers confuse QRS with MBB and other technical assistance programs. They were also confused as to where to get help for improvement and how to pay for these improvements. She said the goal of the committee was to do eight listening sessions and that six have been completed. She said Greenville is the listening session in May and that June 3 marks the date for a listening session in Meridian. Tina Routh said she would go to the Meridian session. May asked about the next step after the listening sessions are done. Berry asked how the data can be incorporated with the Frank Porter Graham evaluation. Dr. Smith said that Laura Dickson suggested that the SECAC report could help on the implementation phase of the QRS revision. Dr. Smith also said the Governor's Office was awarded a grant from the National Governors Association to host a QRS Summit.

Public/Additional Comments

Jennie Sturgis asked Dr. Benton about the standards. She said she sees the implementation for new construction. Sturgis asked how existing child care centers could meet the requirements of these new standards. She asked how private child care centers serving 3's and 4's could meet the construction as well as the education requirements for the teachers. Dr. Benton clarified that these standards are for public PreK to follow and Title 1 PreK programs. Dr. Benton referred to the part of the

document about classroom size as an example. Dr. Benton said there is a lot of information to cover and that she would be happy to talk in more detail with Sturgis about everything. Dr. Smith said a PreK Collaborative can partner with a private child care center and that participating in the collaborative would mean that all would have to meet these new standards. Sturgis said she would love to see how this could be implemented throughout the state. Sturgis said she sees a lot of challenges with meeting these standards. She said she does not think it can happen now, but she would like to see a more unified picture. Sturgis said that the classroom ratio of 1 to 7 is a big challenge. Dr. Smith said funding for childcare centers is an ongoing issue. Dr. Parisi asked if we are creating two tracks towards serving children in public versus private settings. He stated that it could become an issue of equity unless we unify the plan for all children. Routh said some of her best teachers do not have degrees. She added that if they happened to have a degree, she would not be able to pay them. Routh said she could not see how she could mandate these standards from MDE from a financial standpoint. Jenny Kern raised the question of whether following standards would wind up putting private centers out of business. Sturgis asked if Mississippi is the only state that does not give funding to private centers. Dr. Smith said that all states have different structures. The successful ones are offering high standards along with the financial assistance to reach those standards. Sturgis stressed her concern again for a level playing field is needed in Mississippi. Right now if you participate in Mississippi Building Blocks or Head Start you get more support. Children are getting different levels of support and quality throughout the state.

Berry motioned to adjourn. May seconded.

Chair Boggan adjourned the meeting at 10:53 a.m.
