



SECAC MEETING MINUTES – October 3, 2011

Council Attendees: Ricky Berry, Susan Boone, Nadine Coleman, Margarette Davenport, Louise Davis, Jill Dent, Oleta Fitzgerald, Brooks Ann Gaston, Cathy Grace, Annjo Lemons, Steve Renfroe, Lisa Romine, Festus Simkins, Nita Thompson, Rhea Williams-Bishop

Public Attendees: Sheri Anders (MECA), Claiborne Barksdale (MBB), Ellen Collins (SPARK), Laura Dickson (DHS), Eulondi Garry, Helen Griffin (Friends of Children), LaTasha Holmes, Claralesa Manning, Laurie Smith (MBB), Walter Young, Bob Palaich, APA

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action to be Taken
<i>Call the Meeting to Order</i>	Grace called the meeting to order, and Mr. Marvin Hogan welcomed the Council.	
<i>Approval of the Minutes from 7/12/2011</i>	Copies of the minutes from the July 12, 2011, meeting were distributed to the Council. Renfroe made a motion and Coleman seconded to accept the minutes. No discussion of the minutes, and the motion carried unanimously.	
<i>Introductions of Council & Guests</i>	Grace asked the attendees to introduce themselves and name the entities they represented.	
<i>Updates from the Chair</i>	Grace introduced Bob Palaich to the Council.	
<i>Overview of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application</i>	<p>Palaich gave an overview of APA Associates and explained the RTT process and application.</p> <p><u>Complications:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• System/Structure is less formal than other states• Other states invest more dollars in ECE• Coverage is mixed in the State of Mississippi <p><u>Opportunities for hope:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RTT is intended to be developmental• Special consideration is given to rural states	

Strengths:

- Pockets of thoughtful programming exist.

Palaich provided a copy of RTT Conceptual Framework

- The state is writing for \$50M – it may not be likely that states will receive maximum funding if awarded.
- There are differences between what MS needs and what RTT can fund. The state needs to be thoughtful about the funds that are available through this opportunity. This work is difficult in MS due to the lack of system development and cohesive operation.
- Palaich asked for concrete, well-developed input if the Council or guests have any to offer.

Palaich provided an overview of each section of the RTT application.

Section A: focuses on a quality TQRIS: Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

- MS must demonstrate a past commitment – high needs population, racial isolation, Hurricane Katrina
- MS needs a rationale for goals and objectives
- Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State of Mississippi
- Develop a budget to implement and sustain the work

Structural Changes:

- Movement of child care licensure from the Health Dept. to MDHS
- Changes in enrollment for child care certificates
- Changes in formula for QRIS incentives
- Overview of proposed budget allocation- Renfroe asked for a description of the funds budgeted for the Structure. Palaich asked Dent to explain funding for this area, and Dent provided information regarding the new positions to be funded by RTT dollars. Fitzgerald asked for information regarding the way that the current DECCD staff will be incorporated into the proposed budget, and Dent provided clarification. Grace reminded the Council of the new work done through the RTT.

Section B: High Quality Rating and Improvement System

- Positive: MSCCQSS currently exists. Renfroe asked what would drive quality increases in centers under RTT changes, and Palaich reviewed the “Proposed Investment Strategies to Increase Participation in Zero to Five Quality” information in slide presentation.

Section C: The Mississippi Response

- MS has no statewide comprehensive assessment system
- Grace discussed MDE’s screening budget and process
- Boone asked for a breakdown of ideas on general Part C resources, and Romine discussed the plans that had been described.
- Grace described information in the Executive Summary of RFP on page 17 – Engaging and Supporting Families.

Section D: Great Early Childhood Workforce

- Reviewers want a knowledge competency framework and support for providers.

Section E: Measuring Outcomes and Progress

- Mississippi chose to build/enhance the EC data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.

Palaich concluded the presentation, and Lemons proposed a break for lunch then come back for Council member Q&A. Fitzgerald expressed concern over approving the RTT application today, and Grace indicated that the Council is not ready. Grace reviewed the timeline for submission to ensure all voices are heard. Council adjourned for lunch. After lunch, Lemons reviewed the rules for public comment. Lemons gave the Council an update on the consolidated services model. PCG was awarded the contract.

Public Comment

Lemons opened the floor for questions:

- Renfroe asked for clarification of the grant submission timelines. Lemons indicated that SECAC was tapped by the Governor to be the lead agency and will be working on MOU’s.
- Fitzgerald asked if they can fund for less than \$50M. Palaich indicated that this is likely, but that private foundations are interesting in funding plans that may not be funded.
- Grace asked what items are VERY necessary to the success of the application. Palaich stated that programs need to be better aligned and less fragmented. Figuring out the state fiscal responsibility is important and making sure the state system is as efficient as possible. Reorganizing referrals for high needs populations is key, and using data collected is also very important.
- Davenport asked how RTT will be able to reach those children in non-QRIS participating centers at this time. Palaich stated that RTT will provide seed money to all centers who apply for it. Fitzgerald asked

	<p>who providers would apply to in order to receive the seed money. Bishop pointed out that training on quality implementation would be provided through another part of the grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grace asked Palaich to explain TEACH & WAGES. Palaich gave an overview of TEACH & WAGES and the workforce development component of the application. Renfroe asked about monitoring of the incentive process, and Palaich indicated that this does not need to be discussed further. Palaich stated that star ratings will be publicized, and Grace reminded the Council that it is difficult to measure child outcomes due to a lack of consistent screening tools being utilized. A visitor posed that QRIS does not address child outcomes, so the difference between a 1 and a 5 is only that the 5 star rated center has better equipment.• Deloris Suel wondered about data on the children once they enter school. Palaich described possible roadblocks to accessing data from nSPARC, i.e. confidentiality. Fitzgerald asked how that information might be accessed by child care providers. Thompson stated that children would enter the SLDS at birth and can be tracked through the use of a unique child identifier. Coleman stated that the Petal School District is currently using the groups of SD, Head Start, private and licensed child care to come up with a system of using/accessing data. Questions and discussion of how and who can collect data. Grace discussed the stabilization of certificate requirements will help with data. Thompson said this will also track other factors influencing outcomes such as poverty, teen pregnancy, health issues, transportation, etc... Fitzgerald stated that the SLDS would be a system from home to school and interventions so that child care and Head Start centers are connected in such a way that families receive services and resources that they qualify for based on the data from the system. Grace stated that QRIS would provide feedback to centers from that process. As far as children are concerned, a consent form from parents is required to share data about children. She asked more about how to illustrate what happens in Petal in regards to the cooperation between the schools and child care.• Grace asked Council members for requests for clarification of any additional points. Grace stated that the Council members should receive the draft copy of the proposal for review and a vote will happen on Thursday. Grace advised that Council members should receive action items by Wednesday, with the final issued by Saturday for final vote. Renfroe made a motion and Fitzgerald seconded to	
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	<p>accept this process. The motion carried.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fitzgerald asked if all committee members would receive a copy of the grant. Lemons stated that the proposal is a competitive process so members will not have further input on the draft. Fitzgerald indicated that some committee members are not happy with that decision. Berry indicated that the committees have completed their work, and it would not make sense to open it back up for committee members. Barksdale reported that he wanted to see the draft application, and Smith volunteered to sign a confidentiality statement. Grace indicated that there needs to be a decision that is consistent, and Palaich indicated that feedback needs to come from the committee chairs. Renfroe made a motion and Bishop seconded the motion for committee members to be provided with a hard copy of the application. Grace opened the motion for an amendment. Fitzgerald substituted the motion to say that the draft be submitted electronically to committee members upon completion of a confidentiality agreement. Dickson will send the draft copy to the committee members with a confidentiality statement including a timeframe for when the comments must be returned. Bishop seconded the motion. Renfroe is opposed but overruled. The motion passed. 	
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Berry made a motion and Coleman seconded to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:53 p.m. 	