

SECAC Council Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 22, 2015, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Jackson, Mississippi

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Richard Berry, Louise Davis, Juanita Johnson, April May, Lora Mederos, Jennifer McNeal, Nita Thompson, Sandra Parks, Mimmo Parisi, Tina Routh, Marcie Skelton, Laurie Smith, Holly Spivey, Jennie Sturgis

OTHERS PRESENT

Eileen Beazley, Lydia Bethay, LaTasha Brown

MEETING OBJECTIVES

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

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Laurie Smith opened discussion on the August and September minutes. Dr. Mimmo Parisi motioned to approve both sets of minutes. April May seconded the motion. Dr. Louise Davis said to replace “committee” with “community college subcommittee” in the second sentence of the Professional Development and Workforce Committee update from the August minutes. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Committee Progress Update

Data System: Dr. Parisi said the committee has accomplished everything that it can at this point. He went over the recommendations made during the committee’s October meeting. Dr. Parisi said in regard to the second recommendation to evaluate programs and improve them, the grant will help with that by creating an integrated system that can be used to produce reports. Marcie Skelton said she would like SECAC to make a motion to adopt these recommendations, but she said she doesn’t know if everyone knows enough to make a decision. Dr. Parisi said the 10 ECE fundamentals are basic elements that will allow data-based decision making to move forward. Tina Routh motioned to accept the 10 ECE fundamentals. Sandra Parks seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Professional Development and Workforce: Dr. Davis said she had a very successful meeting at Natchez. She said the committee came up with several next steps. She said the committee is looking into the different kinds of placements (such as career technical) in

community colleges. She said the committee scanned faculty degrees at the community college level. She said most community college faculty do not have a master's degree. She also said the committee will create a toolkit for providers and students to use with the current articulation programs in place.

Standards Committee: Dr. Smith said the committee has learned that a lot of childcare centers are using the guidelines based on the survey. She went over some of the other findings of the survey.

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment: Dr. Smith said the committee had a meeting to discuss the latest assessment data. She the report would be presented at the meeting next month.

Quality Rating Standards: Dr. Smith said the final report on the QRS listening session tour is done. The final report was then passed out to the SECAC members. Kelsey Risman from the technical team said the report is finalized. Going over the report, Risman said providers' perception of whether QRS is relevant impacts the provider's primary decision to participate. The participation benefit most emphasized by providers was technical assistance. Risman said the current scoring system was seen as a significant barrier to demonstrating good-faith efforts to achieve quality. Risman said that providers believe there are many different ways of demonstrating quality but that the scoring system doesn't account for everything. She said they believe there are different ways to capture things, such as quality of center staff. Dr. Parisi said the basic idea is that providers are saying that some of the measures are like trying to measure intelligence with a weight scale. Dr. Parisi said the providers feel like certain quality efforts are not being captured by the measurement tool. Routh said unrealistic expectations can be a part of providers' issues with QRS.

Jennie Sturgis said she thinks QRS evaluates environmental factors more than intelligence. She said she thinks there needs to be a balance. She said QRS doesn't necessarily measure what the staff or children are accomplishing. Dr. Parisi said these findings are not about pointing a finger but just encouraging people to look into these issues.

In regard to barriers to higher QRS scores, Risman said access to services was mentioned the most across the listening sessions. Dr. Parisi said an important point is the question of how much the state is helping childcare providers deal with things that might be out of their control. Risman said the report shows that providers desire both accountability and positive working relationships. She said providers also expect QRS to be an improvement tool, with an emphasis on alternative training and assistance with formal education. Finally, she said providers want to be directly involved with discussions on improving/revising the QRS program. Risman said the next step is to consider the recommendations of the report. She also said the technical team is doing a 50-state scan of QRS programs. She said another possibility is a low-power database where you can find out everything about a state's QRS program and its respective components. She said such a database can help answer questions about system-wide evaluation in states (not just QRS). Berry said he will check and see if there is a group already contracted to help rewrite the QRS system. Risman said if there were any questions that SECAC wants to ask about QRS and system-wide evaluations in the United States, a report can be produced.

End-of-Year Committee Reports

Dr. Smith said a survey was sent to each committee chair in order to produce the final committee reports. Dr. Smith said the final reports can act as a launching pad for what SECAC wants to accomplish in the next year. She said the reports include recommended priorities for SECAC to take action on. Dr. Parisi said he personally feels that until there is a clear plan for bringing the worlds of early care and education together, certain types of

work can't be completed (such as the Data Committee's work

Dr. Smith brought up the program sheet with the three umbrellas of early childhood in the state (family, early learning, and health). She said instead of having five or six committees, SECAC could have a committee for each major umbrella, which would help the council integrate these areas. Johnson said professional development should be mandatory for teachers. Dr. Parisi said he likes the idea of having the three major focuses for major committees. He said the three areas can inform the Data Committee, which would become a working committee. He said this can help the Data Committee with having a clear direction. April May said so one of the three major committees might have a question and can then go to one of the five working committees to get the question answered. Dr. Parisi said if the Health Committee comes to the Data Committee with a question, the Data Committee can have a clear direction and be more actionable. Nita Thompson said shouldn't the point about compulsory education apply to both four- and five-year-olds? She said what's the point of making 4-year-old PK required if kindergarten isn't? Dr. Smith asked does everyone agree that having two or three committees would lead to better management and focus? The council raised no objections.

Public/Additional Comments

Eileen Beazley asked when the public could access the SECAC meeting documents. Dr. Smith said reports and minutes will be posted on the website after they have been approved by the council.

LaTasha Brown said she sees some positive changes in the state. She said Jackson State is looking into getting health trainings for their students.

Dr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.
