

SECAC MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 23, 2018, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Jackson, Mississippi

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Takisha Bishop, Margaret Chapman, Margarett Davenport, Brittany Herrington, Patti Marshall, April May, Melissa Parker, Sandra Parks, Mimmo Parisi, Carolyn Willis, Bonnie Windham, Dorthy Young

OTHERS PRESENT

Roberta Avila, Tate Gould, Andrea Sanders

MEETING OBJECTIVES

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

Approval of Minutes

Chair Mimmo Parisi opened discussion on the minutes from the July 2018 SECAC meeting. Sandra Parks motioned to approve the minutes. April May seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion.

SECAC Updates

Andrea Sanders gave an update on the state plan. She said the Mississippi Department of Human Services held a public hearing about the state plan and that there was excellent turnout at the meeting. Comments made at the hearing are being reviewed for their potential incorporation into the state plan.

Chair Parisi said a communication plan can help articulate the state's early childhood standard/comprehensive framework. He asked Dr. Tate Gould to recap the state's progress with the framework.

Parks said the working discussion hosted by the three SECAC committees went very well and that many early childhood stakeholders were present at the meeting. The goal of the session was to receive input on the questions raised by the committees at the July 2018 SECAC meeting. Parks said there was a lot of great feedback.

Brittany Herrington shared the first question and the input received for the question from the working discussion:

Question 1

What are the incentives for a stakeholder to receive a standard and comprehensive designation for any child care center or program serving children?

Feedback for Question 1

- Increase the possibility of attracting and retaining a more qualified workforce.
- Potentially help level the playing field for providers and parents.
- Help reduce administrative burden (reduce the necessity of reapplying if a center pursues the comprehensive designation).
- Help improve professional teacher requirements.
- Improve stakeholder/community engagement (under the comprehensive designation).

Carolyn Willis asked if there would need to be more work on the question above. Chair Parisi said he believes the incentives are powerful.

Parks shared the second question from the working discussion:

Question 2

What is the process to receive the standard and comprehensive designations?

Feedback for Question 2

- Ensure that existing frameworks (such as the different guidelines of the Mississippi Department of Education and Head Start) are aligned.
- Discuss establishing a process of determinations and redeterminations.
- Review the pros and cons of this framework being voluntary vs. mandatory.
- Recommend including data and data systems as part of the process for determinations (which will help determine if benchmarks are being met).
- Help identify available funding and TA support that could be available to all centers interested in receiving a designation.

Herrington shared the third question from the working discussion:

Question 3

How can the standard and comprehensive framework guide the allocation of resources for all entities involved in child care development?

Feedback for Question 3

- Identify the specific needs of subsidized and unsubsidized centers.
- Reduce duplication of requirements from various existing state programs.
- Better examine the return on investment for determinations.
- Help establish one organization/agency to facilitate the management of allocation of resources by aligning services with other organizations.

Parks moved to the final question from the working discussion:

Question 4

Who would be responsible for assigning the standard and comprehensive designations?

Feedback for Question 4

- The ideal organization would include sole regulatory responsibility, continuity of regulations between agencies, neutrality, expertise in early childhood, and the capability to oversee all processes.
- The responsible party could take one of three forms: (1) an existing agency (such as a postsecondary or other state agency), (2) a new “Office of Early Childhood,” or (3) a state children’s cabinet.

May motioned for the council to use all of this information to move forward with the communication plan. Chapman seconded the motion. The council unanimously approved the motion.

Public/Additional Comments

Roberta Avila asked if the allocation of resources in regard to the standard/comprehensive framework is about the Child Care and Development Fund. Chair Parisi said this topic goes beyond CCDF. Willis said the idea goes beyond CCDF funds and that it’s more about looking at all funds available in the state and allocating those resources to meet the needs of more children.

Avila said she is concerned about the providers who are on the waiting list for subsidies. Sanders said right now MDHS doesn’t have a waiting list of providers .

Chair Parisi adjourned the meeting at 11:29 p.m.
