

Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council (MICC)
***Early On*[®] Michigan**
(Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
Michigan Department of Education
608 W. Allegan Street, Lansing, MI 48909
State Board of Education Room, 4th Floor
Thursday, February 14, 2019

Minutes

- Members Present:** Anne Blankenhorn, Andrea Caron, Barbara Corbin, Reneé DeMars-Johnson, Kristina Donaldson, Melissa Epstein, Jennifer Forsthoff, Judy Goth-Owens, Cheryl Granzo, Rachel Harmon, Paula Johnson, Pamela Kies-Lowe, Tiffany Kostelec, Victoria Martinez, Laura McKechnie, Amy Miilu, Karin Nanos, Stephanie Peters, Prachi Shah, Deana Strudwick
- Members Absent:** Nolana Nobles Bandy
- Alternates Present:** Kristen Carmany, Tami Mannes
- Staff Present:** Synthia Britton, Laura Goldthwait, Kelly Hurshe, Noel Kelty, Caroline Liethen, Cheryl Najm, Colleen O'Connor, Barb Schinderle, Meghan Schmelzer, Carrie Tarry
- Grantees Present:** *Early On* Training and Technical Assistance:
Christy Callahan, Allan Knapp, Jorri Novak, and Nancy Surbrook Goins
Michigan Alliance for Families:
Clare Brick
Wayne State University (Evaluation Project):
Charo Hulleza and Luna Xuan
- Guests:** Beth Kennedy, Dawn Koger, Alicia Kruk, Meghan Shepard, Loretta Tobolske-Horn, Jan Weckstein, Karen Wisinski
- Call to Order:** Chairperson Melissa Epstein called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
- Introductions:** Introductions were made, and everyone was welcomed.
- Approval of Minutes:**
- A motion was made by Anne Blankenhorn and supported by Kristina Donaldson to approve the minutes. Motion carried.**

Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Pam Kies-Lowe and supported by Kristina Donaldson to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None.

"Worth Mentioning:"

A recommendation came from the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) to start each MICC meeting with an activity that keeps children and families at the heart of what we do, helps the MICC members, alternates, grantees, and staff get to know each other better, and allows others to understand the different perspectives that make up the MICC.

Andrea Caron is a parent representative from Marquette County, where they currently have 26 inches of snow. She and her husband have three sons who were each in *Early On*. In addition to the services her children received, Andrea shared that she benefited from resources and knowledge from the service providers. Andrea is involved on her Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) and learned about the MICC through her role in the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). She's also a Forestry Consultant and a doula.

Karin Nanos is a speech therapist and teacher from Oakland County. She played a song on her ukulele, like she would do with the children she served, which demonstrates her passion for working with young children with speech delays. Karin learned a lot from the children she worked with and is an advocate for caseload limits.

Updates:

MICC Appointment

Jen Forsthoff, parent representative from Genesee County, was appointed to the MICC in December. She will serve the remainder of Lauren Heilman's four-year term expiring October 31, 2019.

New State Part C Coordinator

Noel Kelty began her duties as the new State Part C Coordinator on Monday, December 17. She was most recently the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) Early Literacy-Family Engagement Consultant, and at one point was MDE's Part B, Section 619 Coordinator. She has varied experiences in the field and will be able to use those experiences as she leads *Early On* into its future.

Preschool Development Grant B-5

MDE received a \$5 million-plus competitive federal grant to help improve care, programs, and services for preschoolers statewide.

Michigan is one of 45 states with awards through the \$250 million Preschool Development competitive federal grant from the U.S. Department of Health and

Human Services and the U.S. Education Department. The grant is for states to improve their early childhood offerings by building on existing federal, state and local early childhood education investments. The grants focus on three major activities: maximizing parental choice, improving transitions within early care and learning programs and with elementary schools, and improving overall quality of early childhood education programs.

Annual Performance Report Indicators 5 and 6

Since the November 8, 2018 MICC meeting, MDE received guidance from OSEP regarding which data source to use for Indicators 5 and 6. This advice is a change from what was shared at the MICC meeting. The following data were submitted in Grads360 to OSEP.

► **Indicator 5:** Percent of infants and toddlers birth to one year with IFSPs compared to national data.

Results Indicator Target: 1.26%

FFY 2015- 1.13%	Target- 1.24%
FFY 2016- 1.30%	Target- 1.25%
FFY 2017- 1.38%	Target- 1.26%

The national average is 1.25%. Michigan's data are .13 percentage points above the national average.

*Sources: U.S. Department of Education, *EDFacts* Metadata and Process System (*EMAPS*): "IDEA Part C Child Count and Settings Survey," 2017. Data extracted as of July 11, 2018. U.S. Bureau of the Census. "2017 State Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin." Data accessed July 2018 from <http://www.census.gov/popest>.

► **Indicator 6:** Percent of infants and toddlers birth to three years with IFSPs compared to national data.

Results Indicator Target: 2.9%

FFY 2015- 2.60%	Target- 2.7%
FFY 2016- 2.86%	Target- 2.8%
FFY 2017- 3.08%	Target- 2.9%

The national average is 3.26%. Michigan's data are .18 percentage points below the national average.

*Sources: U.S. Department of Education, *EDFacts* Metadata and Process System (*EMAPS*): "IDEA Part C Child Count and Settings Survey," 2017. Data extracted as of July 11, 2018. U.S. Bureau of the Census. "2017 State Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin." Data accessed July 2018 from <http://www.census.gov/popest>.

Fiscal Ad Hoc Single Tier Workgroup:

Cheryl Granzo (Ionia) and Tami Mannes (Ottawa) presented findings and recommendations from the Single Tier Workgroup. Both the MICC and the Michigan Association of Administrators for Special Education (MAASE) charged ad hoc committees to determine appropriate steps and criteria for the creation of a single unified system that serves a single cohort of infants and toddlers eligible for both

Early On and Michigan Mandatory Special Education (MMSE). The two groups worked together, beginning in April 2017.

A presentation showed data to support investing earlier yields a greater return. Michigan is the only state with two eligibility definitions, one for Part C Only, the other for MMSE. The four other birth mandate states aligned Part C eligibility with the special education eligibility.

The recommendations are around four areas for consideration:

- Eligibility
- Personnel
- Services
- Funding

Eligibility- The recommendation is to change the definition of eligibility from a 20 percent delay to a 25 percent delay. If changed, 2-3 percent of children currently eligible may not be eligible. The use of informed clinical opinion would still be considered as well as connecting families to available resources and other preventative programs. The mechanism for change is the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) rules (R340.1711 and R340.1744) (Early Childhood Developmental Delay (ECDD), Other Health Impairment (OHI)).

Personnel- There is a discrepancy in staff available to serve children eligible for MMSE versus Part C Only. Children eligible for MMSE have access to more highly qualified personnel. The recommendation is that one group of staff provide services to all eligible children and families. The mechanism for change is to revise the *Early On* Personnel Standards.

Services- The recommendation is that there would be no minimum or maximum number of services provided to a family, but rather services would be determined based on the child's needs identified in the IFSP. By changing this, it would align with the federal law. The mechanism for change is the MARSE rule (R340.1862).

Funding- The approximate funding for children eligible for Part C Only is \$705 per child. No single system can fund *Early On* alone. The recommendation is for an incremental state investment over five years, bringing next year's request up to \$20 million. The mechanism for change is increased state investment in State School Aid Section 54d funds and MARSE rule (R340.1862).

A motion was made by the Fiscal Ad Hoc Single Tier Workgroup for the following recommendations:

- 1. Accept and endorse of the recommendations outlined, based on the MICC charge.**
- 2. Request MDE implement the recommendations of the workgroup, through MARSE rule change, aligning the current MDE 0-3 eligibility guidance and the recommendations of this group, in coordination with this group.**

- a. **In the interim, modify the MDE 0-3 ECDD and OHI eligibility guidance to the recommendation of this work group, thus creating a single tier system.**
 - b. **In the interim, allow *Early On* Part C staff on the SE-4096, per annual updates.**
 - c. **In the interim, allow proration of FTE at any level in the pupil accounting manual to allow services to be offered to meet the family need.**
3. **Advocate for increased funding in *Early On* (54d) and create policy efficiency via the Single Tier simultaneously.**

Discussion:

Melissa Epstein shared a quote from Maya Angelou to the extent of: “When you know better, you should do better.” Michigan began as a pioneer in serving infants and toddlers with disabilities; however, our system is broken and it’s responsible to ask for more money. We can make every dollar work better if we have a more efficient system.

Anne Blankenhorn asked for clarification about the requested funding figure. Christy Callahan shared that the \$20 million is based on an estimate from the [Early On Foundation](#). The request for funding is incremental over four more years, eventually funding the system at \$68 million with state funds.

Jen Forsthoff recommended communicating to the community that the program is still called *Early On*, rather than Special Education, which could be easier for some parents to accept.

Concerns were expressed around having enough personnel to do the work and those without higher education degrees being out of a job and/or having to go back to school for more education. Stephanie Peters shared that in the 1970s there was a shortage of qualified personnel and she and many others went back to school to get a degree and she thinks it can be done again.

Prachi Shah suggested this could provide a bridge with the infant mental health system, recognizing that infants and toddlers have trauma.

Paula Johnson agrees with recommendations and stated that it goes hand in hand with the Primary Service Provider model being used in Ingham County.

Victoria Martinez expressed concern over having no minimum number of visits for a family. She is from Wayne County and worries that for the parents who aren’t able to advocate for themselves, this could result in less services for their children.

Kristina Donaldson thanked the members of the workgroup for their hard work and numerous hours spent on this task. She echoed the concern about having enough staff to serve children and families.

Karin Nanos supports the recommendation and shared that she went back to school to get her ZA using her own resources and was still underpaid and had too many children on her caseload.

Pam Kies-Lowe said there is an opportunity to collaborate with higher education to help personnel get credentialing.

Motion passed 17-1.

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Update:

Due to time limits, the presentation was emailed to the participants.

Celena Barnes Family Leadership Award:

The PIC will be honoring a parent leader at the 2019 *Early On* Conference, November 13-14, 2019 in Traverse City, Michigan. This is the third time the PIC will be organizing this award for their friend and colleague, Celena Barnes, who passed away unexpectedly in 2014. Celena was an MICC parent alternate, a tireless advocate for her daughter and all children in Michigan with special needs, a committed leader, teacher, mentor, and an inspiration to other families.

The information and nomination packets will be distributed in March and Melissa Epstein encouraged MICC members to nominate a parent for this special award.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn was made by Victoria Martinez.

Motion carried.