

Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council (MICC)
Early On Michigan
(Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
Thursday, September 11, 2025
9:30 am – 12:00 pm
Lake Michigan Room
Michigan Library and Historical Center
702 W. Kalamazoo Street
Lansing, MI 48915

Minutes

Members Present: Nerita Adams-Spillers, Kae Dubay, Monica Gaines, Lindsay Galicki, Nicole Hamp, Stephanie Hirschert-Walton, Beth Jenkins, Sophia Lafayette-Lause, Irma Lopez-Barajas, Salina Mann, Tami Mannes, Tori McIntosh, Lisa Perugi, LaShorage Shaffer, Cara Sutcliffe

Members Absent: Nancy Green, Andrea LaFramboise, Amy Miilu, Susan Morningstar, Vicki Thomas

Alternates Present: Jihan Young

Staff Present: Gina Birnbaum, Kelly Hurshe, Cheryl Najm, Colleen O'Connor, Gillian Ogilvie, Barb Schinderle

Grantees Present: Clinton County RESA Office of Innovative Projects:
Christy Callahan, Jen Champagne,
Jenny Koenigsknecht
Michigan Alliance for Families
Kelsey Biswanger, Victoria Martinez
Inter-tribal Council
Amanda Rinna
Wayne State University (Evaluation Project):
Charo Hulleza, Muhammad Moiz

Guests: Beth Kennedy, Kyana Smith, Charron Williams

Call to Order: Co-Chairperson Tori McIntosh 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 Jihan Young and supported by LaShorage Shaffer to approve the minutes.

Motion carried.

Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Kae Dubay and supported by Nerita Adams-Spillers to approve the agenda.

Motion carried.

"Worth Mentioning:"

A recommendation came from the Parent Involvement Committee 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.

Rather than only the parents sharing their story at the beginning of each Council meeting, this would allow everyone in the room a chance to share so that it isn't always the parents being the only ones who share and make themselves vulnerable.

At each MICC meeting, two people will share why the work they do in early intervention is a passion of theirs. They may also include something they've done recently that they are proud of, why they like being part of the MICC, and what brings them to the table.

Dr. Sophia Lafayette-Lause shared beautiful photos of her family, which included her wife, two sons, daughter, and granddaughter. Her commitment to creating inclusive spaces for all children is rooted in her own lived experiences. Born in Belgium and biracial, she grew up in an environment where there were few children or adults who looked like her. Her early experiences in school have shaped her lifelong dedication to inclusion.

Empowering teams is not just part of her work; it is her passion. She finds joy and fulfillment in the outcomes that come from collaboration and advocacy. As a mother, she had to advocate for her son, who has ADHD. She recognizes the privilege she had as an educator and school leader in being able to navigate the system to get him the support he needed. But she also acknowledges that not all families have that same access or ability, and she is driven by the desire to ensure every family has the tools and resources to advocate for their children.

During her time as a classroom teacher, her own children attended the school where she taught. Later, when she transitioned into early childhood education, the birth of her granddaughter gave her mission new meaning, making the work even more tangible and aligned with her personal life.

Throughout her career, Dr. Lafayette-Lause has held a variety of roles, but she is quick to emphasize that it's not about titles or positions. For her, it's about how each role provides an opportunity to empower others, support meaningful work, and make a lasting impact across the state.

Updates:

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

The SSIP focuses on improving social emotional outcomes for infants and toddlers in *Early On*. A variety of initiatives have been implemented, including Pyramid Model Trainings, Parent Child Interaction Observation (PCIO) training, implementing the DECA and eDECA with families, monthly Community of Practice calls, social emotional developmental wheels, and technical assistance. These efforts led to notable improvement prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, since 2021, the social emotional outcomes have not been as robust, suggesting a need to re-evaluate current strategies and re-engage both providers and families in meaningful ways to rebuild momentum.

Over the past year, an emphasis has been on analyzing data and findings from the root cause analysis, where approximately 30 stakeholders participated. Two key themes emerged as priorities for improving social and emotional outcomes for infants and toddlers:

- Strengthening and expanding the workforce's capacity to support social emotional health through evidence-based practices (EBPs), with an emphasis on providers actively engaging families in meaningful conversations and activities.
- Improving the use of child outcomes data to inform decision-making and guide practices.

An updated Theory of Action was developed, and the SSIP action plan will be updated to reflect the newly added activities. Some of the new activities include:

- Training of the Trainer for DECA, PCIO
- Sharing microlearnings after trainings
- Sharing Pyramid Model Training cross-system opportunities
- Offer advanced support to those who have completed the foundational trainings
- Studying the impact of matched COS and eDECA data
- Using social emotional resources to improve child outcomes
- Supporting the cohorts to utilize child and family outcome data and reporting rate data

Another opportunity to strengthen SSIP efforts involves MiLEAP's application for national technical assistance (TA) focused on pyramid model implementation. If awarded, this grant would bring specialized TA to Michigan, directly supporting the state's ongoing work to improve social emotional outcomes and provide targeted guidance to address the challenges experienced since 2021.

This fall, two statewide trainings are offered to support social emotional foundational learning. They are:

- Pyramid Model trainings consisting of five modules
September 8, 15, 22, 29, and October 6 from 2:00-3:15 pm
- The Parent Child Interaction Observation training
September 9 from 9:30 am-12:00 pm

Michigan Division for Early Childhood (MiDEC) Conference

The [MiDEC conference](#) will take place November 6-7, 2025, at Eastern Michigan University. This event brings together professionals, families, and students passionate about improving outcomes for young children with exceptional needs and their families. With engaging sessions, inspiring speakers, and opportunities to network with colleagues, the MiDEC conference is a chance to learn, share, and grow.

State Part C Determinations

Michigan Part C received its 2025 determination from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). For the second consecutive year, the determination is "Meets Requirements."

The following data points were used in the calculation of the determination:

- Indicator 1: Timely service provision
- Indicator 7: 45-day timeline
- Indicator 8A: Timely transition conference
- Indicator 8B: Transition notification
- Indicator 8C: Timely transition conference
- Timely and accurate state-reported data
- Timely state complaint decisions
- Timely due process hearing decisions
- Longstanding noncompliance
- Data completeness (the percentage of exiting children with child outcome entry and exit data reported)
- Data anomalies: statistically significant anomalies in child outcome data
- Comparison of Michigan's Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 child outcome data to FFY 2023 child outcome data of other states
- Child outcomes: comparing the state's FFY 2023 data to the state's 2022 data

Michigan received an overall score of 87.50 percent for its 2025 federal determination performance rating. This is consistent with last year's overall score. The threshold for a determination of "Meets Requirements" is 80 percent.

Michigan scored 100 percent on compliance indicators and 75 percent on results indicators.

Michigan demonstrated improvement over last year with data completeness rating (the number of children exiting Part C with entrance and exit ratings) which increased by 5.93 percentage points from 75.68 percent last year to 81.61 percent this year.

Michigan experienced a slight decline in child outcomes data this year.

Although there is still room for improvement, we celebrate with all of you the progress we have made in improving Michigan's performance on meeting the requirements and outcomes of IDEA, Part C.

MICC Membership

Four members' terms are expiring October 31, 2025. Kae Dubay and Susan Morningstar will not be applying for reappointment. Vicki Thomas and Nerita Adams-Spillers both plan to reapply. We hope to have reappointments and appointments made by the December MICC meeting.

If you know of anyone who might be interested in applying, please share the appointment information. [Appointments \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/appointments)

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Trainings

A recorded webinar series about *Early On* and the Child Welfare System is now available! This informational recorded webinar series will introduce the child welfare system and support an understanding of Child Protective Services (CPS) investigations, procedural safeguards for families, and CAPTA. The recorded webinars can be found at [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](https://www.michigan.gov/healthandhuman).

Early On Systems Work

As a result of the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) early childhood summit in fall of 2025, an *Early On* systems change group has been created. It is led by the MAISA and Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE) organizations, specifically looking at increasing access and equity of services in *Early On* across Michigan.

Detroit Lions Early On Public Service Announcement

Early On Michigan has been included in an exciting partnership with the Detroit Lions, Gud Marketing, and local funders to promote early literacy and *Early On*. At the Lions training facility in Allen Park on August 27 *Early On* personnel were filmed promoting the importance of reading to young children, including infants and toddlers. *Early On* representatives were Dr. Kyana Smith and Charron Williams from Wayne RESA/Detroit Public Schools Community District, and Lynn Legg from Oakland Schools/Royal Oak Schools. In addition, key Lions players were filmed highlighting the fact that you can "Be a Game Changer" by reading to your children. The resulting product will be a public service announcement that can be aired as a television spot and shorter clips that will be appropriate for sharing via social media. Dr. Nikki Hamp, developmental pediatrician, *Early On* Michigan Foundation board member and MICC member, made the connection to the Lions organization. Gud Marketing is donating their production time and expertise. Funding for development and promotion is provided by the Preschool Development Grant, the Children's Foundation, and Gardner-White Furniture.

State Budget Updates for Fiscal Year 2025-26

There is not a lot of information to share around the state budget. Gongwer provides daily updates regarding the House and Senate activities. Members were encouraged to reach out to their legislators and share how they would be affected if the state budget isn't passed by October 1, 2025.

Review and Request of Parent Reimbursement Rates

Lisa Perugi shared information about the history of parent reimbursements and asked the Council to consider increasing the honorarium rate by \$2 per hour.

- Records show we began supporting parents in 1999.
- When the Financial Support Document was created in 2001, the rate was \$12.50 per hour, \$50 child care.
- In 2008- rate increased to \$15.00/hr., child care remained the same.
- In 2010- rate increased to \$15.37/hr., child care remained the same.
- In 2014- rate increased to \$16.00/hr., child care remained the same.
- In 2020- rate increased to \$18.00/hr., child care up to \$60 per day.
- In 2023- rate increased to \$20.00/hr., child care remained the same.
- For 2025, the proposed rate increase is to \$22.00/hr., child care to remain the same.

This request is based on a review of Great Start Collaboratives and Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) reimbursement rates, and the general increases in wages across the country since the last request for a reimbursement rate increase in 2023. The new rates would go into effect on October 1, 2025.

A motion was made by Stephanie Hirschert-Walton and supported by Sophia Lafayette-Lause.
Motion passed.

2026 MICC Meeting Dates

Tori McIntosh proposed the following meeting dates for 2026. It was suggested that the May 14th meeting be a longer meeting, which would include yearly planning and a networking lunch.

March 5	9:30-12:30 pm
May 14	9:30-2:00 pm
September 10	9:30-12:30 pm
December 3	9:30-12:30 pm

A motion was made by Jihan Young and supported by Nerita Adams-Spillers to accept the proposed 2026 MICC meeting dates.
Motion passed.

Michigan Alliance for Families

Kelsey Biswanger is the new *Early On* Liaison for Michigan Alliance for Families (MAF). She shared her personal journey with the Council as well as information about the work MAF has been doing.

Kelsey's youngest daughter received *Early On* services after being born with a genetic abnormality. Despite searching for answers, she never received a formal diagnosis. Her daughter spent over a month in the NICU, and it was during that difficult time that a social worker connected Kelsey with *Early On*.

Through *Early On*, her daughter received speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and consultation for vision and hearing. When her family moved

to a new district, the service model changed, introducing a service coordinator and multiple providers who visited the home. Kelsey wanted her daughter to have more interaction with other children, so they arranged a hybrid approach: in-home services and services provided in a daycare setting.

Kelsey was able to find her community and resources and begin her leadership journey which involved becoming a parent mentor for MAF. She wants to help others by sharing what she once didn't know as a mother of a young child.

MAF has reached over 2 million people on social media. In addition, they have provided training to 3,237 parents and caregivers, 2,146 professionals, and 255 youth and young adults.

MAF published six *Early On* videos in April 2025 and they have been well received. They are:

1. [What is *Early On*?](#)
2. [Natural Environments](#)
3. [Parent to Parent Advice](#)
4. [Transition from *Early On*](#)
5. [Preschool](#)
6. [About Michigan Alliance for Families](#)

This collection of short videos was specifically created to help parents understand and navigate the supports and services available for infants and toddlers who have developmental delays and/or disabilities. Each topic includes closed captions in English, Spanish, and Arabic subtitles.

The newest video, [Procedural Safeguards: Protecting Families' Rights in *Early On*](#), was published in September 2025. Kelsey also highlighted MAF's learning opportunities calendar which contains all the upcoming trainings for the coming year.

Mission, Vision, and Bylaws Ad Hoc

The Mission, Vision, and Bylaws Ad Hoc committee was charged with updating the *Early On* and MICC vision and mission statements and the MICC bylaws. Membership of the ad hoc committee includes MICC members, MiLEAP *Early On* staff, Clinton County RESA staff, MAF staff, and a service provider from Wayne RESA. The committee began meeting in January 2025 and continues to meet through the year.

A survey was sent to MICC/PIC members and *Early On* coordinators asking them to share with their providers, and the listserv for Higher Education asking them to rank order their preferences for the *Early On* vision and mission statements. Around 100 stakeholders completed the survey. For the *Early On* vision, a lot of suggestions were given, and the committee reworked a vision, based on comments from the survey participants. The feedback received on the mission statements was positive. Based on feedback, here are the two recommendations from the committee.

Vision: Empowering and partnering with Michigan's families to support the development of infants and toddlers as they reach their full potential.

Mission: To promote the development of infants and toddlers by providing comprehensive, individualized, and family-centered services through everyday activities.

A motion was made by the Vision, Mission, and Bylaw ad hoc committee and supported by Kae Dubay to accept the *Early On* vision and mission statements.

Motion passed.

Next steps:

- December MICC meeting: vote on MICC mission and vision statements.
- The ad hoc committee will update the bylaws and bring them to the MICC for consideration.

Sharing Information From the Field

Lisa Perugi acknowledged that today is the 24th anniversary of the 9/11 attack.

Kae Dubay shared that the Ingham County Great Start Collaborative is submitting their 32p Block Grant workplan for FY26 tomorrow. Within the workplan, they hope to get into obstetrician and pediatrician offices, along with Sparrow and McLaren hospitals to share information about home visiting and *Early On*.

Tami Mannes attended the International Society of Early Intervention conference in Portugal and left feeling grateful for Michigan's early intervention system because some countries are still building theirs.

Victoria Martinez applauded the leadership and work of early intervention across systems.

Beth Kennedy shared that DeafBlind Central increased the number of children they are serving from 15 to 23 and thanked the Council for the opportunities to speak in many different venues. She also shared that four other states will lose funding and received non-continuation letters, which they are appealing. If the appeal isn't successful, other states will lose funding for interpreters and training centers.

Jihan Young shared that in Kalamazoo, PreK for All has great benefits to the children and families. However, due to misinformation, fewer children are being vaccinated which is a growing concern.

As part of Nikki Hamp's new role, she is partnering with the Autism Alliance of Michigan and will be getting a new clinic up and running called GROW. GROW will take a more holistic approach to serving families with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She hopes this model will spread across the state.

Jen Champagne shared information about the five-part Pause and Reflect training series to be delivered by Dr. Dana Childress beginning on October 14, 2025.
<https://eotta.ccesa.org/Event.php?id=4954>

Tori McIntosh let the Council know that the LEAD-K website has numerous resources for families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
<https://www.michigan.gov/mde/resources/lead-k>

Appreciation for Outgoing Members

Kae Dubay and Susan Morningstar's terms will expire on October 31, 2025. This is their last meeting. Members thanked them for their time with the Council and wished them well.

Public Comment:

None.

Adjourn:

**A motion to adjourn was made by Nikki Hamp.
Motion carried.**

Individuals with disabilities may contact the MiLEAP ADA Coordinator to request an alternative format to these materials. Please visit www.Michigan.gov/ADA for a list of state ADA coordinators.