

**Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council (MICC)**  
***Early On*<sup>®</sup> Michigan**  
**(Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)**  
**Microsoft Teams Meeting**  
**Thursday, May 6, 2021**

**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Melody Arabo, Synthia Britton, Andrea Caron, Melissa Epstein, Monica Gaines, Judy Goth-Owens, Cheryl Granzo, Paula Johnson, Stuart Jones, Noel Kelty, Tami Mannes, Victoria Martinez, Laura McKechnie, Amy Miilu, Karin Nanos, Lisa Perugi, Prachi Shah, Michelle Williams

**Members Absent:** Joe Clark, Kristina Donaldson

**Alternates Present:** Kae Dubay

**Staff Present:** Laura Goldthwait, Kelly Hurshe, Sheryl Kennedy, Scott Koenigsknecht, Mary Ludtke, Cheryl Najm, Colleen O'Connor, Barb Schinderle, Janet Timbs, Lisa Wasacz, Jan Weckstein

**Grantees Present:** Clinton County RESA Office of Innovative Projects:  
Christy Callahan, Allan Knapp,  
Jenny Koenigsknecht, and Nancy Surbrook-Goins  
Michigan Alliance for Families  
Clare Brick  
Wayne State University (Evaluation Project):  
Charo Hulleza and Jane Li

**Guests:** Beth Kennedy, Andrew Marsh, Cecelia Norcross, Doug Williams, 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 Judy Goth-Owens and supported by Noel Kelty to approve the minutes.**

**Motion carried.**

**Approval of Agenda:**

**A motion was made by Tami Mannes and supported by Noel Kelty 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.

Monica Gaines lives in Wayne County and has a son with special powers who is also on the autism spectrum. She works for Healthy Families America in Wayne County as well as the Early Childhood Investment Corporation as a parent coordinator. Her work involves supporting family leaderships skills across the state.

Tami Mannes began her career as an early childhood special education teacher and also worked for the Great Start Readiness Program. Currently she is the director of early childhood services at Ottawa ISD. In 2015, her son was born with a bilateral cleft lip and palate, and *Early On* became personal for her. She had great comfort knowing her son was in good hands with her qualified team of service providers who would be supporting her family. Tami represents service providers on the MICC but also wears her parent hat. She works to support all infants and toddlers in Michigan so they get what they need.

**Updates:**

**State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)**

Service providers in the SSIP Implementation Cohort have been trained by Mary Mackrain and have completed all five modules of the Pyramid Model trainings. All materials and recordings have been uploaded to the shared drive, which is available for all members in the cohort.

The second quarter of fidelity checklists for the e-DECA have been completed. The e-DECA is being implemented throughout the cohort and 92 percent of service providers have been trained, an increase from 50 percent in December. The number of children entered into the e-DECA system increased from 116 to 223. Preliminary data show positive trends for children who have had two e-DECA assessments completed, meaning their scores around protective factors have increased in the areas of initiative, self-control, and attachment.

The SSIP leads continue to meet monthly during the community of practice calls with Mary Mackrain, Kelly Hurshe, and Barb Schinderle to talk about bright spots and pain points. They also participate in live demonstrations related to the e-DECA and are learning how to run reports to examine their data. In addition, office hours are being offered twice a month for deeper questions and technical assistance.

### **Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Grant**

Michigan was awarded federal funding through the PDG-B-5 in 2019. The grant was designed to:

- Conduct a needs assessment to understand what's working, what's not working as well as it should, and new opportunities for the early childhood system; and
- Develop an updated strategic plan to address unmet needs and guide future actions to advance equitable outcomes for all young children and families in the state.

The efforts part of PDG B-5 has served as an important step in achieving the state's vision to strengthen programs to support children's healthy growth and learning. As a result of these activities, the state has developed *Michigan's Birth Through 5 Strategic Plan*. The state's aspirations for this plan rest on the belief that strengthening the system and connecting young children and families to the programs and services they need, when they need them, will lead to more equitable outcomes, stronger communities, and a more prosperous state.

As Michigan finalizes its *Birth Through 5 Strategic Plan*, public comment is sought to gather additional input from families, early childhood providers, and other community leaders. Feedback is critical to helping realize the vision of ensuring all children and families can choose and receive the services and programs they need. Please take a few moments to share your feedback on the needs assessment findings and strategic plan by reviewing the overview document linked and completing the reflection questions in this survey ([Spanish](#) version/[English](#) version). Feedback will be accepted through 5:00 pm, Friday, April 30, 2021.

If you have any questions about the needs assessment, please contact Dr. Ann-Marie Faria at [afaria@air.org](mailto:afaria@air.org). If you have any questions about the strategic plan, contact Leila Sammander at [sammander@schoolreadinessconsulting.com](mailto:sammander@schoolreadinessconsulting.com).

### **Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Staff Updates**

The MDE, Office of Great Start/Early Childhood Development and Family Education welcomed two staff members since the last MICC meeting.

Kelly Hurshe was an *Early On* consultant with MDE from 2012 until her medical leave in August 2019. Ms. Hurshe is regaining good health and has been hired to continue her duties at MDE supporting *Early On*. Ms. Hurshe comes with a breadth of experience within early intervention, preschool special education, and early childhood programs and services. Ms. Hurshe has been a teacher, program coordinator, and consultant. Ms. Hurshe has a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education. Her passion and knowledge make her a valuable asset to the *Early On* work.

Janet Timbs was hired as the Birth to Five Early Childhood Special Education Manager. Previously, Ms. Timbs worked as an educational consultant in the MDE Office of Special Education in the Performance Reporting Unit and served as the

lead for Secondary Transition. She was appointed to three governor's councils including the Developmental Disabilities Council. Ms. Timbs also served as a liaison to the Michigan Transition Services Association Board. Ms. Timbs has over 30 years of experience in serving special education programs and services. Before joining MDE she held various positions with the Saginaw Intermediate School District including director of special education, planner/monitor, principal of the center programs, and teacher of students with cognitive and multiple disabilities. She attended Saginaw Valley State University where she earned her Educational Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership and her Master's in Reading. She is experienced in developing innovative programs and leading change through collaboration, partnerships, and stakeholder input.

**Support Letter for Dr. Shah:**

Melissa Epstein was asked by Dr. Prachi Shah to write a letter of support for a grant called, "Thrive Before Five: Promoting Behavioral Health for Young Children in Michigan." The letter was sent April 9, 2021 and Melissa asked the MICC to approve the support for Dr. Shah.

**A motion was made by Tami Mannes and supported by Judy Goth-Owens to approve, retroactively, the letter of support for Dr. Shah. Motion carried.**

**Medicaid Committee:**

Through the work of the Fiscal Ad Hoc Committee in 2016, one of the recommendations was around maximizing Medicaid funding. A subcommittee worked on this recommendation and made some progress in clarifying the allowability of billing for Part C services.

MDE *Early On* is in the process of a monitoring cycle with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). OSEP has reviewed many components of the Michigan Part C system, including how Medicaid is billed for services. OSEP would like to see Michigan Part C bill for Medicaid consistently across the state and views this as an equity and access issue.

Noel Kelty shared that MDE will be forming a Medicaid committee to address consistent Medicaid billing statewide, increasing equity and access to all service areas. The expected time commitment is minimally 1-2 hours per month and will get started in the next few months. Noel invited MICC members who have experience with Medicaid billing to volunteer to be on the committee. She will also reach out to staff at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Office of Special Education at MDE as well as other partners in the system to help with this work. The previous work from the Fiscal Ad Hoc Committee will be utilized as MDE leads this effort.

**Established Conditions Ad Hoc Committee:**

The Established Conditions Ad Hoc Committee reconvened to discuss recommendations made by the MICC at the November meeting. Additional perspectives were added to the ad hoc, including a service provider, physician, and

epidemiologist. The ad hoc provided recommendations to Director Kelty at MDE and the Established Conditions list is being brought to the MICC for approval.

Victoria Martinez shared a presentation that highlighted the work done, which includes:

- Added correct wording to some syndromes (such as Treacher Collins syndrome, Rett syndrome, Cri Du Chat syndrome).
- Added the acronym when it's more commonly known (such as PKU rather than Maternal Phenylketonuria) and spelled words out in some instances.
- Changed the numbering on Section 5 so it was consistent with the other sections.
- Added some disabilities that seemed more prevalent, under appropriate categories (such as Xeroderma Pigmentosa in section 5.1.e).
- Updated terminology (such as Incontinentia Pigmenti rather than Block-Sulzberger in section 5.1.e).
- Rewrote the paragraph in the header to include language allowing documentation from a medical record, such as strong evidence documented in a CAPTA referral.
- After consultation with MDHHS and the CDC, updated wording around mercury exposure.

Discussion:

The vision was corrected to 20/70 rather than 20/700.

The updated Established Conditions list will be rolled out to the *Early On* field during a combined *Early On/ECSE* webinar, followed by additional training as needed.

**A motion was made by Synthia Britton and supported by Judy Goth-Owens. Motion carried.**

The MICC approved making a recommendation to MDE to accept the Established Conditions list. The MDE will complete a final review of the document and once final approvals have been made, it will be rolled out to the field.

**Wayne State University Presentation Family and Child Outcomes:**

Charo Hulleza presented child and family outcome data which were submitted as part of the Annual Performance Report to OSEP on February 1, 2021. The slides called attention to some statistically significant findings around racial disparities within the family outcomes as well as child outcomes. Within the presentation, maps were included that showed the percent of African American, Hispanic, and White children in the Part C population across the state. The data were reviewed alongside the service areas so participants could see which service areas met their targets for family and child outcomes.

Family Outcomes:

The data show that families with African American children had statistically significantly lower family impact scores than families with White or Hispanic children. The data also show that families living in urban areas reported statistically significantly lower family impact scores.

#### Child Outcomes:

African American children had statistically significantly lower levels of positive child outcomes than White children on five of six reporting measures.

Hispanic/Latino children had significantly lower levels of positive child outcomes than White children on all six reporting measures.

#### Discussion:

Some of the other ethnic groups such as Native American, Asian, and those with two or more races have a smaller sample size and it wasn't possible to show a statistical significance.

Lisa Perugi, *Early On* coordinator in Wayne County, shared that they are doing an additional survey to their families to start to address some of these concerns.

The trainers at *Early On* Training and Technical Assistance, MDE consultants, and Wayne State University staff are prepared to work with individual service areas to provide support and technical assistance around this issue.

#### **COVID-19 Update:**

Tami Mannes shared that Ottawa ISD is providing a hybrid of in-person services and virtual. They are starting to receive more referrals than pre-pandemic and their child find numbers are increasing.

#### **Public Comment:**

The Michigan Alliance for Families launched a four-part webinar series titled, "Building Parent Leadership Skills in Early Childhood." This free series will help parents understand the important role they have in positions of leadership. The goal is to repeat the series several times throughout the year to support as many parents as possible.

#### **Adjourn:**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Tami Mannes.**

**Motion carried.**