

**New York State Early Intervention Coordinating Council
Minutes – December 14, 2021**

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Items																																																
Welcome	<p>The following members/designated representatives attended the meeting:</p> <table><tr><td>x</td><td>Lynn Amell</td><td>x</td><td>Lidiya Lednyak</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Jessica Benton</td><td>x</td><td>Melissa Puchalski</td></tr><tr><td>-</td><td>Marcelle Bichotte-Dunner</td><td>x</td><td>Linda Rennie</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Heidi Bond</td><td>x</td><td>Cheryl Schaefer Coppola</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Raymond Bowman</td><td>x</td><td>Lynn Shea</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Donna Bradbury</td><td>x</td><td>Robin Stegman</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Brigitte Desport</td><td>x</td><td>Angella Timothy</td></tr><tr><td>-</td><td>Amy De Vito</td><td>x</td><td>Elina Tsenter</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Steve Held</td><td>x</td><td>Antonia Weidner</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Cheryl Hogan</td><td>x</td><td>Marina Yoegel</td></tr><tr><td>x</td><td>Talina Jones</td><td>-</td><td>Kayleigh Zaloga</td></tr><tr><td>-</td><td>Leah Esther Lax</td><td>-</td><td>Patricia Zuber-Wilson</td></tr></table> <p>Department of Health staff present: Zahra Alaali, Peter Baran, Ann-Margret Foley, Mike Iorio, Kelli Lyndaker, Kenneth Moehringer, Johanne Morne, Ray Pierce, Katherine Reksc, William Sacks, Kirsten Siegenthaler, Jessica Simmons, Dawn Smith, and Yan Wu.</p> <p><i>All references to the Department refer to the New York State Department of Health, BEI to the Bureau of Early Intervention, and EI to the Early Intervention Program.</i></p>	x	Lynn Amell	x	Lidiya Lednyak	x	Jessica Benton	x	Melissa Puchalski	-	Marcelle Bichotte-Dunner	x	Linda Rennie	x	Heidi Bond	x	Cheryl Schaefer Coppola	x	Raymond Bowman	x	Lynn Shea	x	Donna Bradbury	x	Robin Stegman	x	Brigitte Desport	x	Angella Timothy	-	Amy De Vito	x	Elina Tsenter	x	Steve Held	x	Antonia Weidner	x	Cheryl Hogan	x	Marina Yoegel	x	Talina Jones	-	Kayleigh Zaloga	-	Leah Esther Lax	-	Patricia Zuber-Wilson	
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Welcome	<p>Talina Jones, EICC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. and thanked Council Members for attending the virtual Early Intervention Coordinating Council (EICC) meeting.</p>																																																	
New DOH Staff and EICC Membership Updates	<p>Talina Jones introduced and welcomed the following individuals: Ray Pierce, new Director of the Bureau of Early Intervention, and Johanne Morne, Deputy Director of Community Health.</p> <p>Talina Jones informed members that Raymond Bowman is joining the Council as the new OPWDD representative because Meghan Glass accepted a promotional opportunity and can no longer be on the Council. She also informed members that Linda Rennie is retiring this month and that this will be her last Council meeting. Linda Rennie was thanked and honored for her many years of service and dedication to EI.</p>																																																	
Approval of Minutes	<p>The next EICC full Council Meeting will be Thursday, March 3, 2021 from 10:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The next Executive Committee Meeting will be Tuesday, January 11, 2021.</p> <p>Talina Jones informed the Council that that the minutes from the September 15, 2021 meeting and the October 26, 2021 Executive Committee meeting were emailed to them.</p> <p>A motion was made by Heidi Bond and a second by Lynn Shea to approve the September 15, 2021 meeting minutes. Eighteen (18) members voted in favor, none opposed, and one (1) abstained. The minutes from the September 15, 2021 meeting passed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next full Council meeting will be March 3, 2022• The next Executive Committee meeting will be January 11, 2022																																																

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New Business <i>Bureau Administrative Updates</i>	<p>Peter Baran provided the following Bureau Administrative updates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Department is currently working on guidance to provide stakeholders with guidelines for the collection and use of electronic signatures to indicate parental consent to initiate EI services. An announcement will be sent via the state's EI ListServ once that guidance is finalized. 2) The Department is working on a two-part promotional campaign. The first aspect will be to promote EI in underserved communities. The second part is targeted towards recruiting more providers, which might help with the provider capacity issues, as well as coincide with the proposed competency area document that the Provider Workforce Capacity Task Force created. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau Administrative updates will be provided at the March 2022 meeting
<i>EI-Hub Launch Date</i>	<p>Kirsten Siegenthaler, Director, Division of Family Health, informed the Council that the launch date of the EI-Hub is scheduled for May 2022, and she updated Members on the timeline of the various phases of system testing: component testing has been and will continue to be done; end-to-end testing is scheduled for January 2022; a series of training through the Learning Management System (LMS) and some live training will follow; and then access to the sandbox environment. She stated that there will be some continued building and enhancements of the system after that may live date. Steve Held expressed frustration at the delay of the launch date and time allotted to interact with the new system in the sandbox. Kirsten Siegenthaler said that the Department is working with PCG and NYSTEC and has deployed additional Department resources towards moving this project forward and will provide more communication regarding its progress.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the use of qualitative data and the use of a mixed methodology as it relates to child and family outcomes to ensure the feedback both through data as well as through stories can be captured and improved upon. Additional discussion ensued about the EI-Hub trainings that have been offered to providers, specifically a concern about the “interactiveness” of the trainings. Kirsten Siegenthaler explained that the first step of the trainings that was rolled out was the static PowerPoint Screenshot, and that the second phase will be more of the actual component testing, which is more interactive, and finally, the last phase will be the interactive sandbox that is scheduled to become available towards the end of February 2022. There will be updates to the sandbox after it is rolled out.</p>	
<i>EICC 2022 Meeting Dates</i>	<p>The EICC 2022 Meeting Dates are as follows: March 3, June 16, September 15, and December 15. Members should notify Dawn Smith if they have any conflicts or issues.</p>	
<i>Early Hearing and Intervention (EHDI) Update</i>	<p>Zahra Alaali, Program Coordinator, provided an overview and update on the EHDI program (see presentation). Program goals and guidelines were reviewed, as well as the current and ongoing daily program activities. Zahra Alaali also provided an overview of the Kids Quality Agenda Medicaid Managed Care (MCO) Plan Performance Improvement Project (PIP), which aims to promote screening, testing, and linkage to services for newborn hearing loss, lead exposure, and early identification of developmentally at-risk children. There were questions and discussions about whether the program has reviewed the 1-2-3 timeline and its funding sources.</p>	
<i>Open Discussion</i>	<p>There was discussion about the EI make-up policy requiring that therapy make-up visits must be provided within two weeks of a missed session. Melissa Puchalski stated that in her area providers are struggling to provide make-up visits within that time frame due to parent and staff therapy service cancellations related to COVID. She provided supporting data. She further explained that many parents aren't as accepting of a teletherapy visit. Several Members agreed with the expressed concern and inquired about the possibility of an emergency extension of the make-up visit timeframe. Peter Baran replied that he would bring back the concerns expressed to the Department for discussion.</p>	

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<p>Report of Task Force Activities <i>Provider Workforce Capacity Task Force including Competency- Based Training and Telehealth Update</i></p> <p><i>Rate Setting Methodology Task Force Update</i></p> <p><i>EI-Hub Update</i></p>	<p>Linda Rennie, EICC Provider Member, EIO Nassau County, and Marina Yoegel, EICC County Member, EIO Westchester County, provided an update on the Provider Workforce Capacity Task Force activities (see presentation).</p> <p>Telehealth – Both the family/caregiver survey and the provider survey were approved by the EICC and the Department will assume responsibility for the surveys and any additional Guidance.</p> <p>Competency-Based Training – The EICC approved a reduction in training hours from 1600 hours to 1000 hours for new professionals entering the field. This request will move forward as a regulation change. The Task Force is waiting for the Department to finalize and approve the Competency documents. The Companion document has been drafted and will be shared with the Westchester County academic partners and then with the full Task Force for review.</p> <p>Marina Yoegel reminded the Members that the Rate Setting Methodology Task Force will be discussing the issues of targeted infrastructure-cost neutral reform to address underserved communities.</p> <p>Katie Reksc, BEI, reported that approval was received yesterday for the Competency document and the proposed three area documents and that it is currently being formatted for posting on the website.</p> <p>Due to time constraints, Steve Held, Chair, did not provide an update on the Rate Setting Methodology Task Force, but encouraged Members to review the PowerPoint that was prepared (see presentation). He stated that the presentation was an accurate reflection of the discussions conducted by the Task Force members and that he would be happy to answer any questions Members had regarding it. Furthermore, he stated that he would be requesting that the Department allow the Task Force to add additional members from outside of the EICC.</p> <p>Rob Lillpopp, PCG, and Katie Kirsch, NYSTEC, provided an update on the EI Hub (see presentation). Extensive component testing has been underway, and some county and provider users were invited to test some of the system components. In the future, there will be more opportunities to test as well as access the sandbox. The planned demonstration on the EI-Hub was moved to the afternoon portion of the meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Force updates will be given at the March 2022 meeting • An update on the EI-Hub will be given at the March 2022 meeting
<p>Lunch Break</p>	<p>12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.</p>	
<p>Report of Additional Department Activities <i>Annual Performance Report and State Systemic Improvement Plan</i></p>	<p>Yan Wu, Data and Program Evaluation Unit, Jessica Simmons, Training, Technical Assistance, and SSIP/Outcomes Unit, Kelli Lyndaker, Provider Approval and Due Process Unit presented on the Annual Performance Report and the State Systemic Improvement Plan, which is Indicator 11 (see presentation).</p> <p>The Annual Performance Report (APR) data for the program year 2020-2021, including the SSIP, will be submitted on February 1, 2022 to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), which is housed in the U.S. Department of Education (see presentation). The State determination will be received in June 2022. Data was reviewed and the target setting for the APR program years 2020-2025 was introduced. For the 2021 OSEP Part C Determination covering program years 2019-2020, New York received 78.47% (Needs Assistance), the same as last year.</p> <p>Indicator 4 measures Family Outcomes, including the overall family engagement. Family Outcomes are collected using the Family Outcomes Survey. The Department implemented a new strategy this year which entailed mailing out the survey in four batches instead of just once per year. Reminder letters were mailed and included the online link and QR code, along with a paper survey on the back of the letter to encourage participation. The Department also posted information about the importance of completing the survey and reminders on its new EI Community, a family Facebook Group. To date, the</p>	

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<p><i>PCG (State Fiscal Agent) (SFA) Update</i></p> <p><i>EI-Hub Demo</i></p> <p><i>Fiscal Agent Payment Data Update</i></p>	<p>Department has received 1,779 valid surveys back. Dr. Wu reported on the Department's efforts to improve representativeness in the Family Outcomes Survey. This year the Department is proposing to add reporting representativeness by region and language.</p> <p>There were discussions about how the proposed targets were set, the effect of the pandemic on the proposed targets, and whether the data includes at-risk children, which NYS does not include. OSEP assesses all the states by the same standards even though the states don't all use the same criteria for determining which children are eligible for the EIP. Further discussions occurred about the EICC adding a narrative to the APR report regarding the criteria used to set the proposed targets, the baselines, and family outcomes.</p> <p>A motion was made by Talina Jones and a second by Brigitte Desport to approve the Annual Performance Report as the EI Council's annual legislative report and to submit it to OSEP. Seventeen (17) members voted in favor, none opposed, and one (1) abstained. The motion passed.</p> <p>Due to time constraints, Rob Lillpopp, PCG, did not provide an update from the State Fiscal Agent. Instead, Ryan White, Sherree Sinclair, and Paula Van Meter, PCG, presented a demonstration focusing on the IFSP and the services piece of the EI-Hub within the Case Management component.</p> <p>Steve Held requested more information about filling out a potential if there is a risk of out-of-home placement before respite is approved and other questions about the language used in the new system and its ability to organize information that he would like to address at a future time.</p> <p>There was discussion about developing and recording the child outcomes on the IFSP, specifically the drop-down menu and the ability for the IFSP team to write in their own outcomes instead of using a drop-down menu to ensure that the outcomes are meaningful.</p> <p>Due to time constraints, Ken Moehringer, Fiscal Planning and Policy Unit, did not present on the fiscal agent payment data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update from PCG will be given at the March 2022 meeting • An update on the Fiscal Agent Payment Data will be given at the March 2022 meeting
Public Comment	One (1) public comment was submitted prior to the meeting, but the person was unable to present it. Therefore, no public comments were provided at the meeting.	
Future Agenda Items	<p>Agenda items suggested by EICC members for future EICC meetings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telehealth & the teletherapy survey – further discussion on how teletherapy will be added to the EIP as a permanent option for delivery of EI services and related matters • Child Outcomes • COVID-19 • Health Homes • Family directed assessments 	
Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned by Talina Jones at 3:11 p.m.	