



IOWA COUNCIL FOR EARLY ACCESS

January 21, 2022

9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Grimes State Office Building, B100

400 E. 14th Street

Des Moines, IA 50319

Iowa Council for Early ACCESS Call to Order:

Kimberly Villotti called the Iowa Council for Early ACCESS (ICEA) to order at 9:33 a.m. with a quorum noted on January 21, 2022 in Room B100 of the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building.

Council Members Present: Rozanne Warder, Sue Wittmack, Kimberly Villotti, Michael Bergan, Megan Lancaster, John Fuller, Stephen Mandler, Tonya Weber, Melissa Grennan, Jessie Marks, Eric Locke, McKaylee Heuton, Julie Allison, Karen Thompson

Council Members Absent: Emma Bouza, Jerrica Brink, Aaron Cronk, Annette Hyde, Marcus Johnson-Miller, Julie Jones, Lee Pool, Ryan Tomlinson, Donal Welch, Johnathon Wunderlich

Early ACCESS Staff Present: Dee Gethmann, Melissa Schnurr, Meghan Miller, Tonya Krueger

Guests Present: Nicole Tramp

Approval of Minutes: Kimberly Villotti asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made by Michael Bergan to approve minutes and a second by Eric Locke to approve the minutes from the Iowa Council for Early ACCESS meeting held November 19, 2021. No discussion. Approved unanimously. [Minutes, November 19, 2021](#).

Family Story: The ICEA invited Nicole Tramp to share her family's experiences with Early ACCESS for her son, Bryon. Tramp, Byron's mom, shared with the Council about when Byron was born at 26 weeks 3 days. Byron stayed for 3 months in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). When Byron came home from the NICU, the family received physical therapy, occupational therapy, and social worker support and services from Early ACCESS. Tramp's primary message emphasized parents need support too such as additional support services like therapy, words of encouragement and affirmation. She suggested that Early ACCESS providers need to be aware of the possible signs that parents may need to be offered therapy services. Tramp shared how important this was to her because she did not recognize she needed the support. She normalized what she was feeling and didn't recognize the red flags. Tramp stated she needed to hear that she wasn't different. She closed by sharing, "We have this conversation with every parent...parents who think they are doing OK and go to this group or that and therapy really makes a difference."

APR Family Outcomes (Indicator C4): This agenda item was postponed. It will be placed on the agenda for the next ICEA meeting.

Child Find and PR/Marketing: The ICEA engaged in a discussion about the current and future child find improvement activities while reviewing Iowa's child count, referrals, and referral sources. The Council discussed reviewing the available data to answer questions such as:

- What does Iowa look like in comparison to other states' child find and count for special education?
- Do at-risk states have better long-term outcomes for children?



- Is there a national clearinghouse that compares education outcomes?
- Do we have a breakdown of reasons that parents decline services?
- Who do the referrals come from - were they “ready” for the referral?
- Can we compare Iowa to other states on percent of parents who decline services after a referral?

The Council member, Karen Thompson, shared there is overidentification of students needing special education services in middle school so Iowa’s Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) has been discussing how to identify students in need prior to that point. Additionally, the Council discussed the challenges in the ability to analyze long-term outcomes for children. It will be hard to compare state to state given that each state measures child outcomes differently. It was shared that a few years ago the Council discussed becoming an at-risk state in depth and ultimately decided not to move forward, and instead focus on strengthening relationships with referral sources so other programs can support children and families who are “at risk.” From the data, it was noted CAPTA referrals are a large number of referrals; however, we may not be implementing the most effective strategies. Thompson shared families who call ASK may have a distrust of the system and be overwhelmed. Stephen Mandler confirmed this from his experience. However, when families begin to hear from other families, they begin to trust so family to family support is so important. While there is no national data reported on the percent of referrals which parents decline early intervention services, it could be data collected by one of the national technical assistance providers or through a Part C listserv.

Tonya Krueger presented about Iowa’s Child Health Specialty Clinics (CHSC) providing materials about developmental milestones to Area Education Agencies (AEA) for child care centers. This initiative is through Learn The Signs. Act Early grant. Thirty-six bags were distributed by CHSC Early ACCESS service coordinators in November of 2021, and 245 bags will be distributed to AEAs during February, March and April 2022. This aligns with “Milestones Matter! Learn the Signs. Act Early in Early Childhood Settings”, a training that is being offered statewide to child care providers. For more information shared during this agenda item, refer to the [slides, 6-16](#).

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act - DHS Data: Julie Allison presented information and data relating to referrals to Early ACCESS in order to meet federal requirements associated with Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). Michael Bergan expressed gratitude toward Julie Allison for everything the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) has done to reach children and families referred to Early ACCESS associated with CAPTA. Council members suggested sharing this presentation with the Early ACCESS Grantee Leadership (EAGL) Team so they can see all of the work they are doing is paying off. Allison reported the Early ACCESS providers are serving a higher percentage of children than many other states. Melissa Grennan confirmed it would be great to share these data with EAGL. Additionally, Allison will develop a 1-page document to share this work and data with others. For more information shared during this agenda item, refer to the [DHS Slides](#).

Family Guided Routines Based Intervention (FGRBI): Melissa Grennan and Melissa Schnurr shared information about the Early ACCESS State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and improvement strategies to increase the percentage of families reporting that Early ACCESS has helped them help their child develop and learn. Bergan suggested considering opportunities to share Family Guided Routines Based Intervention (FGRBI) principles with other home visitation programs in order to strengthen the approach across early childhood programs. Schnurr shared that Early Childhood Iowa developed [coaching and adult educator competencies](#) that apply to coaches using any model - part of the development of these competencies included a cross-walk among family support competencies, FGRBI coaching competencies, existing adult educator



competencies and head start competencies. For more information shared during this agenda item, refer to the shared [slides](#).

Announcements: Policy committee update- Suggested state work team and PR/Marketing team shared AAP messages about early intervention in conjunction with specific months through the AEA communication system. Also mentioned opportunity for parents to be involved in advocacy efforts for early childhood. There is not a planned Day on the Hill for early childhood this year. There was an Early Childhood Iowa webinar held on January 5 which was recorded. The recording will be shared with the Council when it becomes available.

The CHSC Year in Review and CHSC quarterly report are uploaded in the meeting folder for the Council to review. CHSC will provide information and resources related to the new diagnosis of pediatric feeding disorder as it becomes available to Early ACCESS providers.

ASK Resource Center is revising the way support is offered to parents through family led groups to connect virtually: [Ask Each Other - Virtual Support Group information](#). It is a support group for families to connect with other families and share experiences, ideas, resources and provide support to like-minded families.

State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) is ready to submit to the Office of Special Education Programs (due Feb 1). Also, the funding application will be posted and Council will be notified to make comments.

Future agenda items:

- Discussed over lunch having a family story told by a father.
- Part B data person to talk about child find from Part C to Part B.
- Medicaid - Jim Donahue, DE Medicaid Consultant.
- ACHIEVE

Adjourn: The ICEA meeting no longer has a quorum. Meeting was adjourned at 1:33pm.

Next meeting: 5.20.22