

Iowa Autism Council Meeting

Final Meeting Minutes – March 14, 2018

Meeting minutes taken by **Beth Buehler-Sapp**

Present: Brandon Arkland, Sean Peterson, Angela Burke Boston, Andrea Keith, Wendy Trotter, Connie Fanselow, Christine Bowker, Nicholos Nopoulos, Jenny Phan, Erika Hertel, and Beth Buehler-Sapp.

Absent: Matthew O'Brien, James Curry, Rik Shannon, Steve Muller, Angela Logsdon, Chris Kliwer and Jeanne Kerkoff.

The council reviewed and voted on the minutes from the November 8, 2017 meeting. Edits were suggested and made. Sean Peterson made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected and Christine Bowker seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

Legislative Update

Sean Peterson shared that Senate File 192, which seeks to establish a licensure process for BCBAs, passed out of the House and should be brought to the floor. Some of the components of the proposed bill include:

- Establish a license for BCBA which will also address which paraprofessionals can work under them (i.e. BCaBA or RBT).
- Lobbyist asked that the ASD insurance bill be amended to require licensed BCBAs for insurance reimbursement.
- Utilized model bill language from Association of Professional Behavior Analysts (APBA) and Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB).

Jenny Phan asked if this bill was similar or different from other states?

Sean P replied it is similar to some and different than other. Some states have more restrictive rules than others for licensure and unique provisions that are not practical or functional. Iowa Association for Behavior Analysis is carefully monitoring the bill activity to try to keep provisions that limit practice at bay.

Jenny P asked if a company moves in from another state will this bill affect the employees they bring?

Sean P replied, "Potentially. We've been trying to make sure legislators know that we are not trying to limit the number of BCBAs with licensure laws, but rather to promote an increase in providers. Each state that has put forth a bill has seen a large increase in the number of Behavior Analysts."

Brandon Arkland asked if "all insurance companies are required to provide coverage for ABA services under the new law?"

Connie Fanselow replied, "No, just insurance companies that are subject to the Iowa State insurance regulations."

Angela Boston added, it depends on the type of plan and who is administering the plan. She also added that the law went into effect January 1, 2018, but a plan wouldn't have to change until it is up for renewal. For example if the plan is up for renewal November 1, they wouldn't have to make changes until then.

Autism Support Program (ASP) Update

Connie Fanselow reported that the proposed cuts from the DHS cost containment has not affected ASP services this fiscal year. Some money will not get used by the end of this fiscal year, so it will be re-allocated to other programs. We will not know if ASP will have money for next year until the appropriations bill for next year is passed.

First draft of the appropriations bill allocates \$500,000 for ASP – which is similar to what was spent this fiscal year, so ASP could probably survive on that.

ASP to date:

- Served 47 kids
- Many are served for short periods of time, like 6 months to a year and then they receive funding through other means – serving as an effective “gap program”
- Two families now have insurance coverage since ASD insurance bill went into effect January 1st, so no longer eligible for ASP
- Have seen a little bit of a reduction of applications – was approximately 3 per month, lately more like 1-2 per month. Not sure why slowing.
- Currently in this fiscal year have had 18 applications, with approximately 70% of them being eligible
- According to January claims, 15 kids are receiving services
- Anywhere from 20-25 kids are on the list as eligible, but not all are accessing services due to various reasons

Connie also reported that the RFP for the BCBA education grant was finally released in January. Responses were due by February 14, 2018 and are currently being reviewed. IDPH will be announcing awards March 28, 2018.

Jenny P reported that the federal appropriations bill in DC is being voted on today (3/24/18) which includes the “Autism Cares Act”.

RAP Update

Erika Hertel reported that RAP is continuing to figure out how to move forward despite funding cuts. She reported that they:

- are still taking referrals
- are hiring a new family navigator in Iowa City
- have posted a position in Council Bluffs, not sure if it is still open

Erika also reported that she and Rachelle Swanson-Holmes attended the National Autism Leadership Summit (NALS) in Ohio in November. The main topics discussed at this year's summit were:

- transition to adulthood

- co-morbidity (primarily mental health and ASD)
- telehealth
- funding cuts

Erika also reported that she and Kafi Dixon are going to Spokane, WA in April as part of their former HRSA grant for a technical assistance session related to ASD and telehealth for ABA.

Strategic Plan Update

Wendy Trotter shared updates on the Department of Education's Autism Navigator project and ASD Supports project for school-aged learners. In May 2018, the Department is hosting a 2 day face-to-face workshop for all participants in the Autism Navigator project. Under the current contract for Autism Navigator, there are extra seats for the primary care course. Wendy has been communicating with Kelly Pelzel with the University of Iowa's Center for Disabilities and Development program who would like to put together a pilot program utilizing the primary care course seats for physicians. She plans to reach out to the 1st Five program to see if they would be interested.

Wendy also shared that the 2018 Special Education Summer Symposium is scheduled for June 11th & 12th, 2018 at the Iowa Events Center. Registration is now open through the Iowa Department of Education website. There are currently between 900 and 1000 people registered, and capacity is approximately 1600 people.

Wendy also shared that Maureen Ziegler from Michigan will be presenting at the symposium on Michigan's Peer to Peer Program. This program is designed increase opportunities for students with ASD to access general education settings and curriculum. Peers model typical academic and social behavior in educational environments throughout the school day and provide support for students with ASD to promote independence and socialization. Peer to peer support programs and inclusion of students with ASD not only affects outcomes for the students with ASD, but can also impact a number of outcomes for typical peers and at risk students.

Erika shared that CHSC/RAP has been expanding diagnostic services to southeastern Iowa. There were a few psychologists in southeastern Iowa who have completed ADOS training. Kelly Pelzel will be mentoring these psychologists as they begin diagnostic evaluations. RAP purchased ADOS kits for them to use as well.

Sean P stated that in northwest Iowa, the Pier Center will contract with some psychology groups to provide ADOS testing.

Other Discussion

Jenny P asked if Iowa required periodic re-evaluations for disability identification, because in Louisiana (where she previously resided), there was a state law that required a re-evaluation every 3 years.

Sean Peterson stated that there is no law in Iowa that requires updated evaluations; however, some insurance companies may require re-evaluations.

Andrea Keith stated that for the Medicaid waiver in Iowa, individuals need to be re-assessed to determine if they still need services, but this is only an observation not an actual “re-evaluation”. The ID waiver may require updated evaluations to stay on the waiver though.

The vote on chair and co-chair positions was postponed due to the small number of meeting attendees and being short of a quorum. Wendy asked if anyone was interested in the positions to email her and then the council can vote at our next meeting in June.

Wendy gave an update on council membership, sharing who was leaving and those who were newly appointed. Sean P shared that he will be moving out of state sometime in the next several months and that he will let us know if he will be able to make it to the June meeting.

Next Meeting–Wednesday, June 13th. We will have 4 new members and we will review the Strategic Plan as well as the 2018 Priorities.

Sean Peterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Erika Hertel seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm.