

Early Childhood Iowa
State Agency Liaison Meeting Minutes
September 10th
8:00-9:30 a.m.
Lucas Building – Room 142



Attendees: Jane Borst, Gretchen Hageman, Laurabelle Sherman-Proehl, Bob Russell, Mary Nelson, Shanell Wagler, Barb Khal, Michelle Stover Wright, Jenny Hodges

Empowerment Lean Update

- Community Empowerment hosted a Lean Event the second week in June in an effort to define Empowerment's role in an Early Care, Health and Education System, at a state and local level, to help young children and their families be successful.
- Shanell shared the results from this event and next steps in moving forward with the findings. To view the full version of the findings, timeline for implementation, etc, visit the following link on the Empowerment Web site:
http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us/about_us/lean_activities.html.

Event Objectives:

- Improve efficiencies and effectiveness at the state level
- Improve efficiencies and effectiveness at the local level
- Find a balance between maximizing flexibility at the local level and meeting state level requirements, including but not limited to, fiscal, quality and legislative.
- Clarify Empowerment's role, responsibilities and relationships within the larger system, i.e., Early Childhood Iowa
- Establish consistent performance accountability for the services provided in empowerment areas.
- Examine governance structures to ensure they are aligned and work together
- Examine the branding of "Community Empowerment."
- Identify hindrances to the system's success.
- Examine structure for state funding and make suggestions to the Legislature if necessary.
- Ensure the Empowerment structure provides local areas with the tools and support needed for good fiscal accountability.

What Priorities Were Identified?

1. Levels of Excellence
2. Regionalization

3. Re-define Empowerment Areas
4. State Structure
5. Marketing

What are the Next Steps?

The Lean team has created a “homework” schedule which includes a great deal of information gathering from various stakeholders and leaves room for consideration of alternate or additional ideas in each of the areas of change. As some items may involve 2010 legislative action, an aggressive schedule is being planned.

Input and feedback is crucial for each of the steps taken. For initial feedback, questions have been developed for each of the focus areas. These questions will help sort the initial input received. A variety of feedback methods will be utilized for persons wanting to provide input. This information will be coordinated through the Iowa Community Empowerment Web site. The Lean Design Team will be meeting monthly to move forward with homework and action steps. Input received will be provided to them. Assignments for homework items will be delegated and coordinated. Some items involve work groups that will need to be formed. The current list of homework is being reviewed and sorted by each of the focus groups.

- A survey will be sent out to the SALT, ECI Co-Chairs and the Iowa Empowerment Board in an effort to obtain feedback around which entity would be the best fit to serve as the “coordinating body”

Suggestions

- Need to clearly define the characteristic expectations a coordinating body would possess (Empowerment is currently working on this list)
- Further define the EC Office staff responsibilities
- Make sure the Regents’ Institutions for higher education are listed and listed separately. List ISU and ISU Extension as separate entities as well

State Structure

- The group reviewed a draft diagram of what the State Early Childhood Structure would look like in light of the Lean Event. Suggestions in regards to this diagram included:
 - Make it an effort of the EC Board to look at overlap between other groups (e.g. State Child Care Advisory Council, MCH Advisory Council, etc)
 - Further define “EC System”
 - Rename “Early Childhood Office”.....(e.g. Early Childhood Coordinating Center)
 - Break the Early Childhood Office box in two splitting up the TA Team and EC Office

Professional Development

- The Professional Development steering committee has made progress towards completion of the *Policy Framework for an Early Childhood Iowa Professional Development System* document, which will be approved at the end of September by the steering committee. This document is adapted from the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s *Workforce Designs: A policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems* report. The twelve page framework will provide our systems with priorities and next

steps for implementation of a comprehensive, integrated professional development system.

- There are currently workgroups in place based around the four ovals who will continue to meet. If you have suggestions for representation on these oval workgroups, let Gretchen or Jenny know.

Early Childhood Advisory Council Application

- Early Childhood Iowa was officially named by the Governor as the State's Early Childhood Advisory Council. ECI is in the process of applying for funding through Health & Human Services to support the work of this Council. The application is not due until August of 2010; however, the goal is to submit the application by early December.
- The group reviewed a draft version of the goals/objectives for this application. Gretchen will revise the document to include feedback from the September 8th ECI Council meeting, then send out to the SALT and Co-Chairs group for further feedback along with a link to the full application guidance.