

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND
SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COUNCIL (ICC)
MEETING MINUTES**

Videoconference Host:

Governor's Council
550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1230
Anchorage, Alaska
Videoconference

Meeting Date

Tuesday, January 18, 2022
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Attendees:

Jena Crafton - Chair
Bunti Reed
Carmen Wenger
Chelsea Burke
Emily Urlacher
Eric Talbert
Hattie Harvey
Jimael Johnson
Kathy Berry
Kim Mix
Kimala Rein
Kristen Spencer
Kyle Darbonne
Maureen Harwood
Nancy Strahan
Nauyak Hyatt
Patricia Olmstead
Shannon Parker
Susan Kessler

Staff:

Jackie Kim
Jamie Kokoszka
Jess Doherty
Myranda Walso

Prepared by: Sheila Garrant, Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 9:03 a.m.
ROLL CALL - Quorum not established

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Maureen Harwood welcomed members and attendees to the ICC meeting.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No conflicts of interest were declared.

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES AND AGENDA

Approval of the agenda and previous meeting minutes was tabled due to a lack of quorum.

OUR DAILY BUSINESS

EI/ILP Program Mission Moment

Maureen Harwood introduced Patty Olmstead, who supports the Nome ILP Program, and Shannon Parker, who supports several of the programs in the region.

Patty Olmstead and Shannon Parker shared a PowerPoint presentation titled *NSH ILP Mission Moment* and highlighted the following information:

- The region has 15 different sites.
- The population of the area in 2019 was approximately 9,700.
- Historically they had therapists on staff, but now the challenge is finding itinerant therapists willing to provide services. Most therapists do not want to travel due to COVID-19, but they are willing to do virtual services.

Patty Olmstead shared pictures that showed the region, terrain, children receiving in-person services, an example of virtual services, and extreme weather conditions families have to navigate for clinic visits. She noted that the challenges they face in the Nome region include:

- The COVID-19 pandemic and all the things that go with managing safety and administrative issues
- Brutal weather
- Daily changing planes for travel
- Broadband connectivity

Patty Olmstead remarked that she has become an advocate for having a travel team for the rural/remote regions, because it's simply impossible to recruit individuals who provide services that are needed, even on a quarterly basis, to come into the communities virtually or in person. Hattie Harvey commented that the presentation

spoke to the continued need for trans-disciplinary work in serving all the different communities.

BIG COUNCIL BUSINESS

Getting to Know the New Council Structure

Jess Doherty reported that the new Council structure has five standing committees besides the Executive Committee:

1. Self-Advocacy and Leadership Committee (SALC)
2. Employment Committee
3. Community Inclusion, Supports, and Services Committee (CISS)
4. Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)
5. Legislative Committee

Jess Doherty reported that Council staff is working to incorporate the work from the former Education and DD Committees into the CISS Committee to ensure the momentum continues. The Council is also working on cross-presentation within the committees to circumvent siloing the work of the committees.

Jess Doherty reported that the winter Council meeting is scheduled for January 31st – February 1st, 2022. The staff has been busy gearing up for the virtual event to make sure it runs as smoothly as possible given the COVID-19 pandemic. As the legislature begins the session, the Council staff has been preparing for a travel team to go to Juneau and visit with legislators.

Myranda Walso remarked that the Council is going through a restructure but is focused on the important work done through the EI/ILP Program activities and projects.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

ILP Financial Overview

Maureen Harwood reported that one part of the responsibilities for the ICC from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations is to have an awareness of how the ILP is funded. Maureen gave an overview of the funding structure of EI/ILP and highlighted the following information:

- EI/ILP operates under Part C of the IDEA.
- IDEA Part C allows states to determine their eligibility criteria: Alaska's eligibility requires an infant or toddler to have a diagnosed condition or have a 50 percent delay in one area.
- Part C infants and toddlers receive a wide range of specialized services, including family service coordination, occupational, speech and/or physical therapy, and specially designed instruction.
- Many services families include on their IFSP are part of protections in Part C of the IDEA law.

- The state funds 80 percent of the program, and the federal government funds 20 percent.
 - Total funding for direct services, \$9,278,308
 - General funds - \$7,424,500
 - Federal funds - \$1,853,808
 - (The federal award totals \$2,352,796)
- Other supports for the funding programs include:
 - State staff, highly qualified professional development
 - IT services
 - Developmental screening
 - Medicaid funds for targeted case management and other allowable therapy services
 - Certification and credentialing costs
 - Participation fees and third-party insurance.
- Total referrals in FY 20 - 3,434.
- Referral sources include medical, family/friend, early childhood, social services related, and others.
- The majority of referrals come from medical and social services related.
- Total enrollment for FY 20 - 1,804
 - Age 2 - 3 1,062
 - Age 1 - 2 458
 - Under 1 284

Maureen Harwood reported that the Special Education Grant for Infants and Families received \$1,218,273 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. This year, the program is allowed to offer \$300,000 to the local programs for Child Find initiatives and to grow services.

Maureen Harwood shared that the federal requirement for the ICC with regards to finances is covered in CFR 303.604:

- Advise and assist the lead agency (SDS)
- Identification of sources of fiscal and other support for services for early intervention service programs under Part C of the Act
- Assignment of financial responsibility to the appropriate agency.

Maureen Harwood noted that the EI/ILP Program is structured to receive guidance on governance, quality standards, finance, accountability, quality improvement, personnel and workforce, and the data system. Susan Kessler remarked that the EI/ILP has a very strong finance committee that consists of several ILP coordinators statewide, Maureen, and herself. She noted that they are responsible for financial planning and program monitoring.

Myranda Walso asked what the best mechanism is for fundraising or donations to support EI/ILP activities. Maureen Harwood responded that donations and fundraising activities are allowable at the local level for independent programs. She shared that the Alaska Infant Learning Program Association (AILPA) and Alaska Association on

Developmental Disabilities (AADD) would have more information regarding donations and fundraising for programs.

Trust Program Support

Jimael Johnson, a program officer with the Alaska Mental Health Trust, reported that the Trust has been intentional about developing and investing in early childhood-related work. The EI/ILP and Part C are critical partners in that effort. Other partners, including Help Me Grow, are valuable for developmental screening and helping to improve access for children who may not be ILP eligible. She stated the Trust is excited about a new project being introduced, because it focuses on the needs of families who would otherwise fall through the cracks.

Jimael Johnson explained that many families who get referred to IL through the child welfare system don't make it to the critical assessment juncture for any number of reasons. The hypothesis is that if there were more flexible resources that were not tied to the strict federal timelines, they could reach those families and find out if their children have developmental delays. If they don't, they can consider that outreach and turn to support those families who are clearly going through something because they were referred through the child welfare process. The Trust believes there are many families and children that could benefit from that kind of flexible outreach.

Jimael Johnson reported that with the help of partners, the Trust was able to get an allocation in the Trust budget for \$460,000 a year. They are looking at possibly up to four years for the work to develop. Hopefully over that time it can become sustainable, because there would be a proof of concept. She reported that the funds would be distributed through SDS ILP. It would essentially fund positions in up to four communities that do outreach to seek out families who would otherwise be lost to follow up. Jimael reported that the in-earnest planning for the project will be starting soon.

Maureen Harwood added that with regards to sustainability, potential sources of sustainable funding to explore during the project period include the Medicaid State Plan Services Targeted Case Management, OCS, and Behavioral Health Waiver Services.

REPORTING BUSINESS

EI/ILP Annual Report Update: What You Should Know

ICC Committee Roles Related to Annual Reporting

Susan Kessler explained that the ICC's role in reporting includes annual review and input on the 11 performance indicators, feedback on target setting, and input on the five-year planning. As a reminder, Susan shared that the SSIP is a multi-year plan which guides the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based policies and practices so that the EI/ILP can positively impact child outcomes. Alaska's SSIP is focused on improving the social-emotional. The State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR) selected in 2012 is Indicator 3.A.1: The percent of infants and toddlers who entered the EI/ILP program functioning below a level compared to same-aged

peers in positive social-emotional skills and substantially increased their rate of growth in positive social-emotional skills by 3 years of age or program exit.

Susan Kessler reported that specific to the ICC is a requirement to draft a statement of feedback to OSEP and the Governor on the program's progress on indicators. The role of the ICC stakeholders is to set targets and evaluate whether ILP is meeting targets, and that is done through a certification form and a letter the ICC writes to the ILP.

Susan Kessler shared that EI/ILP is on the cusp of turning in federal reporting, which will be submitted by February 1st, 2022. They are also in the process of finalizing the updates to the SSIP. She stated that those documents will be posted on the state ILP website.

When asked when the ICC membership was developed, Myranda Walso responded that the ICC policy was drafted and presented to the ICC during the December meeting and adopted by the Governor's Council's Executive Committee during its December meeting. The Council began by looking at the indicators and the interest they had from different members on serving on the ICC. Unfortunately, the Council's lead staff member assigned to the ICC resigned, and there was a bit of disruption. Staff ended up finalizing the ICC roster prior to the meeting. Myranda remarked that it is a work in progress, and there is still room for improvement.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next ICC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 15th, 2022, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Reoccurring meetings will be held the third Tuesday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

GOOD OF THE ORDER & ADJOURNMENT

Myranda Walso noted that there had been some staff turnover at the Governor's Council. One of the things the Council will work on going forward is that access to communications will be centralized and shared in a box at GCDSE_staff@alaska.com. The meeting invites and other communications will be scheduled from that same account. All of the Governor's Council staff have access to that account, ensuring more visibility moving forward.

The meeting ended at 10:18 a.m.