

Early Childhood Advisory Council  
June 21, 2016  
Meeting Minutes

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the Early Childhood Advisory Council was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on June 21, 2016 at the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA), Frankfort, KY.

**Roll Call**

The following members were present: Representative Tom Burch, Marilyn Coffey, Dreama Gentry, Steve Davis representing Secretary Vicki Glisson, Paula Goff, Wayne Lewis representing Secretary Hal Heiner, Amy Hood, Rick Hulefeld, Chair, Jennifer Miller, Amanda Ellis representing Commissioner Stephen Pruitt, Cory Curl representing Brigitte Ramsey, Nicki Patton Rowe, Kathryn Whitmore, June Widman, Deborah Williams, and Darlene Hoover, DCC Designee. The following members were not in attendance: Senator Danny Carroll, Jane Chandler, Ben Cundiff, Tracy Haddix, Cindy Heine, Daphne Hosinski, Anna Shepherd, Dr. Ruth Ann Shepherd, Terry Tolan, Rita Williams, and Rachel Yarbrough .

**Welcome New Staff.....Rick Hulefeld**

Welcome was given by Rick Hulefeld to new staff members of the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood, Amy Bremer, Professional Learning Coordinator and Kayla Jones, Leadership Development Coordinator.

**Approval of Minutes, March 17, 2016**

On motion by Representative Tom Burch and second by June Widman, with all in favor, the minutes of the March 17, 2016 ECAC meeting were approved.

**Community Early Childhood Council Funding.....Hazel Combs**

Hazel Combs, Community Early Childhood Coordinator with the Kentucky Governor’s Office of Early Childhood gave an update on the 2016-2017 Community Early Childhood Councils. Ms. Combs gave a brief history of how funding for the CECC’s was established with passage of the KIDS Now legislation in 2000 which provided funds through Tobacco Settlement Dollars. The focus for the 2016-2017 Community Early Childhood Council grant cycle is for all councils to support families with children who are not in an organized child care setting. The 2011 Child Trend Study found that more than 40% of Kentucky’s children are not in child care, head start or a Pre-K program. The councils were urged to engage additional partners to broaden the scope and reach of their Council and to reach out to local government and business community to engage them in our work. The goal of the GOEC is to have a highly effective Community

Early Childhood Council in every community. Ms. Combs recommended, and requested, \$1,287,000 in funding for the 75 Councils applying for grants in this 2016-17 operating year. A motion to accept the presentation and request was made by Representative Burch, seconded by Amanda Ellis and was passed unanimously by the Council, Marilyn Coffey sustained. The PowerPoint presentation given by Hazel Combs is available on the [www.kidsnow.ky.gov](http://www.kidsnow.ky.gov) website.

Rick Hulefeld commended Hazel Combs' work with the Councils.

**Ready Kids Conference.....Hazel Combs**

A READY KIDS Conference promotion was given by Hazel Combs. Ms. Combs informed the Council that as of June 20, 2016, there are 682 people registered for the conference. She thanked the sponsors, without whom we could not have this conference. Ms. Combs then announced the list of sponsors and vendors. She proceeded to talk about the speakers who will be featured at the conference, Dr. Dana Suskind and Dr. Walter Gilliam. Ms. Combs announced that the Race to the Top Federal Agents granted permission for Kentucky to give up to 300 scholarships for Star rated Centers and homes to attend the conference. As of June 20, 2016, 24 centers have applied (65 applicants). The deadline to apply for the scholarship is June 27, 2016. More details about the conference can be found on our website [www.kidsnow.ky.gov](http://www.kidsnow.ky.gov).

**Superintendents Toolbox and Summit.....Jennifer Miller and Kayla Jones**

Jennifer Miller, Director of the Head Start Collaboration Office, announced that Kayla Jones is the new Leadership Development Coordinator for the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and will be taking over the Superintendent's Toolbox and the School Readiness Summit.

Ms. Miller spoke about the first School Readiness Summit that took place November 18, 2015 in Frankfort, KY. She explained that Superintendents and community partners gathered to discuss how to engage our community partners. Each district work group designed a 30-60-90 day plan, and many have been sending in the results of their plans. The results show the Summit was a tremendous success. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood is already seeing improvement in mobilizing communities and kindergarten readiness in the areas of those who attended the Summit.

The Summit was an important collaboration between the Governor's Office of Early Childhood and the Kentucky Department of Education. It is a community impact program in order to help communities understand how they can work together in their roles of gathering people together to commit to a plan and then come together to work this plan to see their goals achieved.

We were able to accept 25 districts to attend the first Summit. Thanks to additional funding from the federal government we will be able to invite another 25 district attendees to the next Summit.

Ms. Miller announced that at the National Governor’s Association Comprehensive Strategy Cross-State Conference in Portland, Oregon June 15-17, 2016, Kentucky was one of the models of an innovative state conducting a summit and many states are looking to find out more information from us on how to have a successful summit.

Ms. Miller told the Council that the Superintendent’s Toolbox is being monitored and the results show that it is widely being used. The Superintendent’s Toolbox is found on the Department of Education website.

Kayla Jones, Leadership Development Coordinator of the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood, announced that the National Governor’s Association has offered to extend support for the School Readiness Summit. The date for the next planned Summit is September 22, 2016 at the Frankfort Civic Center. Applications for the Summit will be accepted beginning August 15, 2016.

**Race to the Top Update.....Dr. Wayne Lewis**

Dr. Wayne Lewis, Executive Director of Educational Programs, Kentucky Education & Workforce Development Cabinet, gave an update of a meeting that took place June 13, 2016 with the Race to the Top Program Officers. Commissioner Adria Johnson, Karen Kidwell, and Dr. Lewis represented the Kentucky Department of Education. The purpose of the meeting was to give the Federal Program Officers an opportunity to meet and speak with the new Kentucky Administration. Secretary Hal Heiner of the Kentucky Education Cabinet will be meeting with the Administrators in Washington, D.C. at the end of June to let them know we are committed to the completion of this grant. The Federal Program Officers are tentatively scheduling a visit to Kentucky in the fall of 2016 to give us feedback on our progress. Dr. Lewis gave appreciation to the leadership of Secretary Vickie Glisson of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

Rick Hulefeld asked Dr. Lewis to give Secretary Heiner our appreciation for his determination to follow through with the grant’s completion.

**Stars Launch.....Linda Hampton and Sally Shepherd**

Linda Hampton, Kentucky Division of Child Care, began by commending the leadership from the current administration and thanked them for their support. Ms. Hampton mentioned that currently a timeline, incentive plan and communication plan were being put together for the kick-off of the new All Stars program, which will take place July 1, 2016. There will be a meeting

this afternoon with the Partnering Agencies Communication Directors. In this meeting they will work on the necessary edits to the original communication plan. The standards of the All Stars program will roll out July 1, 2016. The program will begin to migrate into the centers. The Migration Plan will be sent to the Federal Plan Administrators. At that time, we will ask child care providers to volunteer to be a part of the new system, and the Division of Child Care will work with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to make sure the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) is privy to the information.

Sally Shepherd, Kentucky Department of Education, announced that Kentucky has from July 1, 2016 through July 1, 2017 to implement the new All Stars program. At that time, all standards must be in place. It is time to look at all the processes to see that we are providing the right resources in a timely manner. We have one year to balance what we can do and what needs to be done. She asked for continuous feedback from all the programs and directors to make sure that what is being implemented is working. Currently we have 28-30 4-Star child care centers in the state. The important thing is to work toward better quality child care. A new set of standards were developed in order for us to have higher quality providers. We took feedback from providers as well as other states that have already gone through the Race to the Top challenges and we adhered to all of those recommendations. Two phases of pilots have narrowed our requirements down to 33. It is increasing the path to quality.

The first phase of the plan will be calling for volunteers to step up to participate in this program early. Once the program is implemented, all child care programs will be a part of it. We are emphasizing quality care, not just receiving a star. We will provide support and service to the centers to help them become higher star rated. Standards for each Star category will roll out July 1, 2016.

An incentive plan has been developed and will be released once it has been approved by leadership.

**Collaborative Pre-K.....Amanda Ellis**

Sally Shepherd spoke for Amanda Ellis regarding the Collaborative Pre-K program. This is a collaborative effort of private and public pre-schools, not just a Kentucky Department of Education initiative for the partnership grants. The RFAs and the grants will be in two tiers. Tier 1 will be a planning grant. This would give the districts, communities and organizations that wish to work together an opportunity to plan that out. This is not a school district only, they may choose to partner with a child care in another county, etc. Tier 2 is an implementation grant. This grant would be for areas that already have some type of collaborative effort between public preschool and private child care. The question is, how can

they expand that effort and make it stronger. The main focus is high quality, full day. The Advisory Committee is meeting Thursday to decide how these will be rolled out.

Amanda Ellis, Associate Commissioner Office of Next Generation gave the timeline information. The timeline is very aggressive because we want the money to get to the districts to be utilized as much as possible. The goal is to post the RFA July 15, 2016. The letter of intent to apply deadline is August 1, 2016. The RFA closes August 30, 2016. We plan to announce awards by the 15<sup>th</sup> of September and hopefully will be sending out funds by the 1<sup>st</sup> of October. This is an aggressive timeline but we do not want to have missed opportunities to reach children. This will create an opportunity to start creating and building partnerships and initiatives that have never been started before in our communities. This is a great opportunity for districts to reach out to their communities to see who is available and willing to partner and that is a big commitment on both sides. We have an intensive technical assistance plan to introduce the grant, to help provide assistance in explaining what the grant is asking and then even after it has been awarded to assist with helping and support to initiate and plan.

**New Workgroup Structure.....Rick Hulefeld**

Before Race To The Top there were subcommittees that did extraordinary work. There was a sense we could make things happen. Because we were able to accomplish great things, even without funding, is one reason we received the Race To The Top grant funding. Now it is time to dream again. We are going to repurpose the ECAC committees and will also be adding new committees. There will be a one year timeline commitment. We are going to work together to bring each of these pieces to the next level. I request all of us do what we can with what we have and make a real difference. Rick Hulefeld named and described each subcommittee. (The list of committees and descriptions can be found on our website: [www.kidsnow.ky.gov](http://www.kidsnow.ky.gov)).

**Conclusion.....Rick Hulefeld**

Closing remarks were given by Rick Hulefeld. We are in an extraordinary time. We have dreamed and dreamed. The roll out of the Quality Rating System is just another amazing step forward. The Superintendent’s Toolbox, the work of the Community Child Care Councils and now the grants to actually encourage and incentivize the partnerships. All of these are things we could not have possibly dreamed two years ago. I want to thank you and I am hoping that you will continue to dream forward with us because what can come out of these subcommittees is truly amazing. We need to keep dreaming, and we need to dream with what we have. We have been good at that, we just need to make sure we keep dreaming forward for our kids.

Meeting adjourned at 11:46 am.