

Friday, January 19, 2024  
Meeting Minutes

Public Meeting 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
ZOOM Meeting Platform

A regular public meeting of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) was held on Friday, January 19, 2024. The meeting was held via ZOOM meeting platform. The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:30 a.m. by Joyce Salzberg, Acting Chair.

#### **Welcome**

- I. Joyce Salzberg welcomed attendees and read the Welcome Statement.

#### **Attendance**

- I. Maintained by the Department of Health (DOH)

#### **Introductions**

- I. SICC members and DOH representatives were introduced.
- II. Quorum requirements were met.
- III. Public members signed their attendance through the chat box in the ZOOM platform.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

- I. The November 17, 2023 Minutes were *APPROVED*; 8 Yes, no opposed, 3 abstained, 1 not present, no discussion. Motion by Catherine Colucci, seconded by Michele Christopoulos.

#### **SICC Member Updates**

- I. Welcome to new Council Members, Ms. Saira Hussain Akhter and Mr. Samuel Kivell.
- II. Congratulations, Susan Evans, on her appointment as President of the Infant and Toddler Coordinator Association.

#### **SICC Standing & Ad Hoc Committees Reports**

- I. **Administrative/Policy Committee**, vacant chair
  - A. No updates
- II. **Service Delivery Committee**, Virginia Lynn, Chair
  - A. Ms. Virginia Lynn announced the Committee welcomed some new Members.
  - B. The Committee's main focus is the current challenges providing Early Intervention in childcare settings.

Ms. Kathleen Hinnigan-Cohen mentioned that childcare setting should also include any setting providing Behavior Analysis (BCBA/ABA) services to a child.

The State is working on getting representative from Head Start for the SICC Committee.

- C. Ms. Corinne Catalano read Patricia Carlesimo chat message that LADACIN just received their 4 Star rating from Grow New Jersey Kids. Congratulations.

### III. **Fiscal Infrastructure Committee**, Kathleen Hinnigan-Cohen, Chair

- A. No new updates.
- B. Ms. Hinnigan-Cohen asked the State if there were any updates regarding the rate study.  
DOH Response: The rate study is in progress.  
Ms. Hinnigan-Cohen stated there was a request for the rate study results submitted to the DOH. The Response received back was a denial due to the study still being in draft form.
- C. Ms. Joyce Salzberg wrote a letter to the Commissioner requesting a meeting to discuss the rate study.
- D. The Committee is also actively looking into the Medicaid Rates reimbursed for services.
- E. The State is working on getting data regarding the non-emergent cancellation.

### IV. **Personnel Preparation Committee**, Corinne Catalano, Chair

- A. No new updates.

### V. **Family Support & Transition Committee**, Nicole Edwards, Chair

- A. The Committee is working on suggested website messaging that would be more parent friendly and has been invited to REIC meetings to discuss.
- B. The Committee has a draft of the Pediatric Health Care Provider survey to send out soon.
- C. The Committee is also working on a survey for Service Coordination and Part B Representatives Regarding their experience with the transition process.
- D. Brandy Acolia will forward Nicole Edward's Nov 2023 email with links to the websites to the new SICC Council Members.

## **Regional Early Intervention Collaborative (REIC) Update**

- I. No new updates

## **Lead Agency Report**, Susan Evans, Part C Coordinator

- I. Federal Updates
  - A. No new updates

### II. State Updates

- A. Letter of Agreement (LOA) with Early Intervention Providers (EIP), presented by Alvina Seto, Regulatory Officer
  - i. Received by DOH along with the Self-Assessments and General Supervision Plans.
  - ii. Next steps by DOH include returning the LOAs to the EIPs with all signatures and providing an addendum related to transfer of ownership, and reviewing formal requests for Comprehensive EIP status. Policy 18 outlines the Comprehensive process.
- B. The Federal Application process will start mid-February. The Public Comment period on the application will be announced to stakeholders once the application is ready.

- C. The process called Connect which allows for faster communication with families is moving forward.
- D. A future ask for a work group to improve the service verification log (SEV).
- E. The Family Directed Assessment and Progress Summary Forms are being updated in the EIMS.
- F. The State will put the Family Cost Participation data on the agenda going forward.
- G. The suspension process remains paused.
- H. Budget updates will be coming soon.
- I. Ms. Hinnigan-Cohen will be working with Sirisha Vadrevu from DOH to discuss and plan new EIMS reports features.

III. Procedural Safeguards Office (PSO), Beth Lohne, PSO Coordinator

A. PSO shared the following from July 1, 2023 to January 16, 2024:

- Formal Complaints = 9
- Informal requests for assistance = 2,222  
This is mostly due to disruption of services and access to timely services.
- Access to Timely Services update. Formerly known as No Provider Available (NPA).
- Compensatory Service process preliminary results. 598 Compensatory Service hours awarded.  
Access To Service (ATS) meetings held as needed per county.

B. Ms. Saira Hussain Akhter requests the data to be broken down further into sub-categories for future meetings.

**Department of Health (DOH) presentation of the Annual Performance Report (APR)**

- I. Indicator power point previously sent to Members.
- II. The APR Indicators 1 through 11 were presented and reviewed. The SICC Council had a chance to comment and ask questions, as did the Public.
- III. The Indicators are:
  - Indicator 1 – Timely Services FFY 2022 NJ Compliance: 78.34%
    - Provider shortages in parts of the State affected the Timely service data.
  - Indicator 2 – Natural Environments FFY NJ performance: 99.76%. Met target  
Primary setting is the location where the child receives most services.
  - Indicator 3 – Child Outcomes:
    - 3A Summary Statement 1: Did not meet Target and no slippage
    - 3B Summary Statement 1: Did not meet Target and no slippage.
    - 3C Summary Statement 1: Did not meet Target, state had slippage and the slippage was meaningful
    - 3A Summary Statement 2: Did not meet Target and no slippage.
    - 3B Summary Statement 2: Met Target and no slippage.
    - 3C Summary Statement 2: Met Target and no slippage.
    - Data completeness of 53.87%
  - Indicator 11 – State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)  
Creating a more comprehensive and modern process of professional development.
  - Indicator 4 – Family Involvement
    - Second year using the Early Childhood Outcomes Survey.
    - There has been an increase in responses from non-native English speakers to the survey.
    - 4A: Met target
    - 4B. Met target

- 4C: Did not meet target and there was slippage in this sub-indicator.
- Indicator 5 – Child Find (Birth to One)  
Exceeded the target of .72% with a .86%
- Indicator 6 – Child Find (Birth to Three)  
Exceeded the target of 3.5% with a 5.61%
- Indicator 7 – 45 Day Timelines  
New Jersey’s compliance was 99.72%; the target is 100%
- Indicator 8 – Transition  
New Jersey’s compliance was 100% for 8A, 99.6% for 8B, and 98.3% for 8C; the target is 100%
- Indicator 10 – Mediations – NJ had less than 10 and did not need to report.
- Dr. Susan Evans announced that OSEP has added a 12<sup>th</sup> Indicator for FFY23-APR due February 2025

*MOTION:* Council Members were asked to vote on the content of the APR to be submitted to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The content is acceptable to submit as presented. Motioned by Michele Christopoulos, seconded by Kathleen Hinnigan-Cohen.

*DISCUSSION:* Discussions occurred during the presentation of each Indicator.

On Indicator 1, a question was asked in regard to Salem County. Being they were the lowest in compliance in the cohort, why is an agency not listed under the finding’s indicator?

DOH Response: All ten of their untimely children were due to access to timely reasons so they were not issued a finding.

On Indicator 1, a question was asked, what was the theme of why there were low percentages in Camden and Sussex Counties?

DOH Response: Overall for the State Access to Timely Services was the major theme. Camden County was twenty-three and Sussex County was the majority of their untimely Children were related to no provider available as well.

On Indicator 2, a question was asked, is this a compliance indicator or a target indicator?

DOH Response: It is a performance indicator.

On Indicators 1 & 2, a question was asked, how is the random sample generated?

DOH Response: DOH applies the business rules to the back end data pulled from the Early Intervention Management System (EIMS). This gives DOH the initial data set. Then DOH employs the 95% confidence level to 5% confidence interval random sample calculation. Through excel spreadsheet.

On Indicators 1 & 2, a question was asked, where are the six family reasons defined?

DOH Response: They are applied terms with the Federal Government.

On Indicators 1 & 2, a question was asked, on the slide that talks about age, race, and ethnicity, what is the ‘other?’

DOH Response: These would be non-natural environments. Justification is found in the child’s Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP.)

On Indicators 3 & 11, a question was asked, is there a plan to change the way social/emotional and relational health is measured in the future?

DOH Response: There is a tool used to see if people are actually applying what they learn. As far as social/emotional outcomes based on the Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI), would be a larger stakeholder conversation.

On Indicators 3 & 11, a question was asked about data completeness.

DOH Response: Data Completeness is the number of children that had a BDI evaluation when they came in and an exit evaluation when they left the system. Exit evaluations are only done on children who have been in the system for at least six months and the family can decline.

On Indicators 3 & 11 , a question was asked, is there information regarding the tools other states use to measure outcomes?

DOH Response: New Jersey participates with other states who use the BDI. Some states are single tool, some use the Child Outcome Summary Form. New Jersey does get compared to other states.

On Indicators 3 & 11, a question was asked, why the Fidelity Tool was removed.

DOH Response: DOH has not determined where internally data support analysis will be so it was removed until options are looked at.

On Indicator 11, a question was asked, will New Jersey require Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to be completed?

DOH Response: The System is not set up to require, but to incentivize.

On Indicator 4, a question was asked, what electronic format is the survey issued in?

DOH Response: There is a link sent out via email. A text message is being explored, but is more involved regarding permissions.

On Indicator 8, a question was asked, Is fifty-four an average number for families to decline a Transition Planning Conference (TPC?)

DOH Response: Yes.

*APPROVED:* 8 approved, no opposed, 1 abstained, 3 not present during the vote.

## **New Business**

### I. Future Meeting Dates:

March 15, 2024

June 14, 2024

September 20, 2024

November 22, 2024

## **Old Business**

### I. Next steps for the Sub-Committees

II. A Chair Person is needed for the Administrative/Policy Committee

III. The relaxation of Policy 14 is under advisement of the DOH

IV. Further discussion of the Recommendation Excel Spreadsheet

V. Continued monitoring on the 'new' BDI resulting in lower acceptance into Early Intervention.

## **Public Comments**

**The following comments were made by members of the public:**

David (Kenneth) Holmes, ABCD EIPA –

- Mr. Holmes congratulated Susan Evans on her appointment to President of the Infant and Toddler Association.

- Mr. Holmes appreciated the format of the agenda giving the public the opportunity to comment on the APR.
- Mr. Holmes expressed an LOA verbiage Concern – DOH response: Legal Team is looking to draft an agenda to address the concern.
- Mr. Holmes requests an updated list of EIPs
- Mr. Holmes stated NJEIS-18 lacks specificity and metrics. Requests DOH refines the Policy, looking at more metrics and data. Mr. Holmes offered the ABCD EIPA's assistance.

**Submitted Chat Messages as Public Comments:**

- None in chat as Public Comment time commenced.

**Submitted Written Comments:**

- None submitted

There were no additional public comments.

The Public can submit comments to the Department or in the Chat Box which are recorded for the Department.

The next SICC public meeting is March 15, 2024, 9:30 a.m.

*MOTION* to adjourn the meeting by Kathleen Hinnigan-Cohen and seconded by Corinne Catalano at approximately 1:00 p.m.