



**Friday, January 21, 2022**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**ZOOM Meeting Platform**

**Public Meeting 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

A regular public meeting of the New Jersey State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) was held on Friday, January 21, 2022. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held via ZOOM meeting platform. The meeting was called to order at 9:37 am by Joyce Salzberg, Acting Chair.

**Attendance**

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

**Welcome**

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

**Introductions**

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

**Approval of Minutes**

- I. Kathleen Hinnigan-Cohen motioned to approve the November 19, 2021, meeting minutes; Seconded by Corinne Catalano.
- II. The November 19, 2021 minutes were *APPROVED*; 9 YES, no opposed, 4 Abstained; no discussion.

**SICC Member Updates**

- I. Susan Evans announced the new Early Intervention Operations Manager, Rajneet Goomer
- II. Joyce Salzberg thanked Sandra Howell for all her contributions and dedication to the NJEIS in her role as Director for Early Intervention

**SICC Standing & Ad Hoc Committees Reports**

- I. **Administrative/Policy Committee**, Chair-Chanell McDevitt
  - A. Chanell McDevitt shared information regarding the Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) Training. Information emailed to Council Members for later discussion.

## II. **Service Delivery Committee**, Chair-Virginia Lynn

- A. Virginia Lynn shared the Committee's focus on addressing Agency Assignment and Early Intervention (EI) Home Concept topic
- B. Committee Recommends instituting a pilot program where EI home agencies including specialty programs for children with hearing and vision loss are assigned to families prior to initial Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). Recommend beginning in one county in each Regional Early Intervention Collaborative (REIC). Virginia Lynn discussed information on a Procedure Document emailed to Council Members prior.  
Proposed receiving agency should be assigned before the IFSP Meeting rather than after to help connect the agency to the family sooner and promote EI Home Concept.

*MOTION*: Catherine Colucci motioned that Council send the recommendation to institute the pilot to the Department of Health (DOH).

Seconded by Virginia Lynn

*DISCUSSION*: Further clarification requested on who is attending the meeting from the receiving agency and the intent behind their attendance. Virginia Lynn elaborated on the 4 month suggested length of the pilot, metrics will be collected, and the receiving agency representative should be trained. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and additional cost for the State mentioned.

*APPROVED*; 10 YES, 2 opposed; 1 abstained

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

- A. Committee is focusing on family no-shows for confirmed appointments, whether or not to reinstate the family cost share suspensions for outstanding balances, the quality and type of data coming out of Early Intervention Management System (EIMS), and the issue of having a 90-day period for practitioners to enter claim data but the cycle for families to be notified about family cost share amounts is 60 days.
  - i. Committee summarized:
    - 1. No-Shows - No-shows continue to be reported as a significant issue for providers. The current Early Intervention Management System (EIMS) does not capture this data, making it difficult for the State to address. After discussion with the EI Administration, the Committee requests that the State look into adding a field or a drop down to the already existing fields in the EIMS to capture no-show cancelations within a certain period of time.
    - 2. Reinstatement of the Family Cost Share Suspension - Committee determined that it is best to hold off on making any recommendations to reinstate suspension to families for outstanding balances due to the current climate of the

COVID-19 activity and the continued financial impact on families throughout the state.

Committee will revisit this issue in a few months.

3. EIMS Data - There are significant issues with the types of data and reports generated from the system as well as the quality of the data that comes from the EIMS. Committee will be developing a survey on how this is impacting Providers and Service Coordination. Results of the survey will be shared with the State EI.
4. 60-Day/90-Day Issue - The difference in the timing creates an issue with the accuracy of balances that families owe for Family Cost Share. The Committee recommends changing the timeline for entering a claim to 60 days, but there is a concern for the unintended consequences that this adjustment may bring. The Committee will be asking the providers for feedback regarding this survey.

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

- A. Corinne Catalano shared the Committee is creating a New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS) Applicant Review Form and Guiding Document to help agencies with the enrollment process.

**V. Family Support & Transition Committee, Chairs-Nicole Edwards**

- A. Nicole Edwards shared the Committee has a new parent representative
- B. Focusing on Birth to One referrals; improving screening and referrals
  - i. Sub Committees looking at exemplars/patterns in New Jersey, the United States, and what may be barriers in New Jersey.

**Review and Approval of State Performance Plan Indicators 3,4,11**

**Presented by Patty Green, Kristen Kugelman, Kendra Taggart, Susan Evans, and Robyn Bruton**

- I. Indicator 1 - Timely Services
- II. Indicator 2 - Natural Environments
- III. Indicator 3 - Early Childhood Outcomes
- IV. Indicator 11 - State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
- V. Indicator 4 - Family Involvement
- VI. Indicator 5 - Child Find (Birth to One)
- VII. Indicator 6 - Child Find (Birth to Three)
- VIII. Indicator 7 - 45-Day Initial Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) Timeline
- IX. Indicator 8 - Transition

*MOTION:* Dr. Joseph Holahan motioned to accept the Annual Performance Report and submission as presented.

Seconded by Kimberly Peto

*APPROVED;* 13 YES; no opposed; no discussion

**Lead Agency Report, Susan Evans**

- I. Federal Updates

- A. No movement on the provision that is currently in the Federal Budget about Part C programs related to the collection of family fees and other changes for Part C programs.
- II. State Updates
  - A. Welcome to Rajneet Goomer, the Early Intervention Operations Manager
  - B. The Time Study portion of the Rate Study has been postponed 1 month due to COVID challenges
    - i. DOH is working on a formula and process to provide a stipend to practitioners who participate fully in the Time Study component of the Rate Study.
    - ii. The delay may push the final report back, but PCG will try to stick closely to the original schedule despite the shift in the original timeline.
    - iii. Thank you to the agencies - 40 EIPs (78%) for submitting information to the Public Consulting Group (PCG)
  - C. Request for Application (RFA) for next data vendor contract is actively in progress
  - D. The Welcome to EI packet has been translated in to 3 additional languages and will be added to the EIMS
  - E. DOH continues to work the "hit list" of enhancements that have been requested
  - F. COVID
    - i. The Executive Order about "health care workers and booster vaccinations" does not apply to NJEIS personnel as a profession
    - ii. Individuals may work in a setting that may be covered by the Executive Order
    - iii. Flexibilities for virtual evaluations are in effect through January 31
    - iv. There are no plans to return to only Telehealth in response to the increase in omicron/COVID.
    - v. Workforce instability continues to affect all workforce sectors, including NJEIS, creating NPA in Multiple counties
      - 1. Comment regarding reimbursement for no-shows and cancelations
      - 2. SICC members asked for clarification and guidance from DOH for the COVID Protocols requested.

**Regional Early Intervention Collaborative (REIC) Updates, Jennifer Buzby**

- I. Translation/Interpretation
  - A. Now utilizing the services of Integrated Translation Services (ITS)
  - B. Many agencies have not accessed the Over the Phone (OPI) interpretation since the contract with ITS began in July 2021.
  - C. The Southern REIC is sending quarterly reports to each agency outlining the frequency and type of translation being used by the agencies and units.

**New Business**

- I. No updates

**Old Business**

- I. No updates

**Public Comments**

David Holmes, ABCD Early Intervention Provider Association, provided the following

comments:

Thank you, Sandra Howell; Welcome, Rajneet Goomer

States he believes it is premature to start the pilot that was discussed by the Service Delivery Committee

COVID protocol - restated that the more information for providers, the greater the consistency among everyone and that is helpful.

No-Show/Cancellation - States he believes that there is a direct correlation to Practitioners leaving the system.

Karen Olanrewaju

Stated that she remembers that in 1998 there was reimbursement for cancellations and she would like to see it reimplemented.

Cynthia Newman

Commended all of EI for their ongoing commitment

Cynthia reported a 17% cancellation rate in the Mid-Jersey Cares Region.

Eileen Masticova

Facing major struggles in the field; no-shows, family's not choosing telehealth option.

Asked DOH to send out a basic guideline communication to families regarding COVID protocol.

The next SICC meeting is March 18, 2022, 9:30am.

*Motion* to adjourn the meeting by Catherine Colucci and seconded by Kimberly Peto at 1:15 pm.