

Preschool Special Education Working Group
Tuesday, October 27, 2019
1 – 3 p.m., Room 1B, Legislative Office Building

Meeting Minutes

Attending: *Beth Bye, Commissioner, Office of Early Childhood; Bryan Klimkiewicz, Division Director, Bureau of Special Education, State Department of Education; Sarah Eagan, Office of the Child Advocate; Elisabeth Teller, Director, SARA Inc. – Kidsteps; Donna Notti, Birth to Three Coordinator, Cheshire Public Schools; Deborah Richards, Director of Student Services, Capital Region Education Council CREC; Eric Protulis, Director of Pupil Services, ACES; Bridget Gordon-Hickey, Associate Executive Director of Student Support Services, LEARN*

Special guests: *Andrea Brinnel, Part B Coordinator, State Department of Education; Alice Ridgway, Part C Coordinator, Birth to Three System, Office of Early Childhood; Terry Carroll, CT Association of Public School Superintendents*

Introductions

Commissioner Bye welcomed the members to the third meeting of the Preschool Special Education Working Group. Each of the members introduced themselves.

Summer Months

Alice Ridgway presented a draft summary of estimated cost of Birth to Three covering summer months for children who turn three as of May 1 or June 1 (through August 31), and are deemed eligible for Part B services. She used the last five years of data to arrive at an estimate.

The estimate presented is based on the highest possible cost at \$120 an hour. If every service on the IFSP is provided at that rate, the estimated cost could be just over \$1 million. Based on an estimate of 60% covered by Medicaid, the total state cost would be \$600,000 with \$400,000 in federal Medicaid funds.

Questions were raised whether school districts could share part of the cost. Andrea Brinnel noted that there likely would be little cost savings to the district by having some children served by Birth to Three because Part B summer extended year services would still need to be delivered regardless of the number of children in the class.

It was noted that during the summer months, some parents want a lighter service touch and may not opt for extended Birth to Three services. In addition, some parents may opt for Part B extended year services because there is no fee while Birth to Three has a family cost participation fee. There was discussion whether May 1 or June 1 is the most appropriate cut-off date, with overall consensus for May 1.

Commissioner Bye said this important policy discussion with the goal to reduce multiple service transitions for the child.

Draft Outline of Report

Commissioner Bye provided a draft outline of the report and opened it up for discussion. Deborah Richards said the report must address the challenges of transition. Sarah Eagan suggested the report provide a section on transition outcomes to address the variability of the level of services by school

district. For example, some districts offer full-day and others half-day services. Eagan said the variability of services must be considered in how it affects children based on zip code, race, ethnicity, etc. Andrea Brinnel said that SDE is contracting with the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) to answer these data questions, but the report will not be ready in time for this report. Commissioner Bye said the report should reference the forthcoming NIEER report.

The working group reached consensus on the draft outline with the addition of transition challenges and a section on transition outcomes (see below).

Next Steps

The next step is to write a draft report to review at the final meeting on December 19. Working group members offered to write sections of the report – see the report outline below. The due date is December 12; members will submit the draft sections to the OEC. A reminder will be sent out to the authors December 9. After the report is reviewed at the December 19 meeting, final edits will be made. The report will be submitted to the Education Committee by January 1, 2020, pursuant to Public Act 19-184 - An Act Concerning Various Issues Relating to Special Education.

Future Meetings

The next meeting is December 19, 1 to 3 p.m., Room 1B, LOB.

Adjournment

The working group adjourned.

Birth to Three - Preschool Special Education Working Group Report

DRAFT OUTLINE

Introduction (to include challenges of transition) - Deborah Richards, CREC

Overview of Part C - *Alice Ridgway, OEC*

Overview of Part B / 619 - *Bryan Klimkiewicz, Andrea Brinnet, SDE*

Differences and Similarities - *Alice Ridgway, OEC; Bryan Klimkiewicz, Andrea Brinnet, SDE*

Summary of Exit data - *Alice Ridgway, OEC*

Part C 7/1/18-6/30/19

Part B 10/1/17-9/30/18

Transition Outcomes – *Sarah Eagan, Office of the Child Advocate*

Children Exiting Birth to Three Not Eligible for an IEP in a Pre-K Setting – *LEARN, ACES, CREC*

What is Currently Available to Families? Plan for Improvement

Options for Building Local Resource Capacity

Tracking Children - 3 and 6 month follow up

ECE Provider Developmental Screening, i.e. ASQ, Sparkler

Local Resource Packets – LEA develops and distributes

Children Exiting Birth to Three with an IEP Who Turn 3 in Late Spring of Summer Months – *Deborah Richards, CREC*

Overview of the Issues

Policy and Practice Considerations

Cost Considerations *Alice Ridgway, OEC*

Birth to Five Early Childhood Intervention System – *OEC, School Finance Project*

Overview of the Issues

Policy and Practice Considerations

Cost Considerations

Universal Preschool – *Beth Bye, OEC*

Overview of the Issues

Policy and Practice Considerations

Cost Considerations

Summary of Practice and Policy Recommendations – *OEC, SDE*