

MEETING MINUTES

March 15, 2022 | 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Recording of meeting available upon request

DECC Member: Madeleine Bayard, Heidi Beck, Matt Burrows, Bryan Haimes, Kirsten Olson, Elizabeth Ritchie, Lucinda Ross, Jamie Schneider, Meghan Walls

DECC Ex-officio Members: Kim Brancato, Kim Krzanowski, Mary Moor, Melanie Thomas-Price, Elizabeth Timm

Attendees: Adrienne Davis, Agnes Pont, Aisha Ferrell, Amanda Penuela, Amber Shelton, Amy Fish, Amy Roe, Amy White, Andrea Prettyman, Anne Atkinson, Annie Norman, Audrey Carey, Barbara Johnson, Bill Doolittle, Bridget Williams, Caitlin Gleason, Christy Wright, Cindy Brown, Cindy Gibbs, Clarise Brooks, Crystal Sherman, Danielle Garcia, Danielle Hawkins, Dawn Alexander, Dena Nacci, Diane Frentzel, Edwin Hernandez, Erika Vidal, Erin Lynch, Eugenia Mumford, Hayley Waters, Heather Campbell-Molitor, Irene Ashe, Jamie Walko, Jane Bowen, Janice Barlow, Jason Hustedt, Jeanna Capito, Jen Potts, Jen Pulcinella, Jennifer Marsh, Jennifer Spinks, Jenny Grady, Jessica Bell, Jessica Morgan, Jessica Vandewater, Jill Karlson, Jon Sheehan, Julie Bieber, Katrina Daniels, Kellie Cruz, Kelly Sherretz, Kim Tomlinson, Kimberly Cruz, Kimberly Garvey, Kristy Sheffler, Laura Lessard, Lauren Cataldi-May, Lillian McCuen, Linda Clark, Linda Zankowsky, Lisa Miller, Lisa Savino, Lynn Kelley, Marcie Pate, Mark Holodick, Marlette Lofland, Maxcine Williams, Michele Stant, Molly Cleary Merrill, Molly Van, Nicole Polite, Nikkie Bowe, Noelle Bartkowski, Onedia Purnell, Pam Weir, Patricia Belle-Scruggs, Patricia Lynch, Rebecca Wilcynski, Rhondalin Cannon- Tingle, Sam Davis, Sarah Bucic, Sarah Owens, Shebra Hall, Simon Workman, Stefanie Ramirez, Stephanie Wagner, Stevi Smith, Susan Lang, Symone Hackett, Tara Woolfolk, Tika Hartsock, Tina Shockley, Toni Dickerson, Tracey Quillen Carney, Tracey Wertz, Tredena Trott, Veronica Commodore, Violet Waters, Yvonnise Bulluck, and others (unnamed) via telephone.

Madeleine Bayard, Chair, Delaware Early Childhood Council (DECC), called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and welcomed everyone. The group was advised of the following:

- This is a public meeting and is being recorded
- We will show materials on the screen and all materials are on the Public Meeting Calendar - <https://publicmeetings.delaware.gov/#/>
- Use the chat box to submit questions
- Mute your microphone if not speaking and unmute if speaking

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the January 18, 2022, DECC meeting. The motion was made by Matt Burrows, seconded by Heide Beck, and a vote was taken on the minutes. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting minutes were approved.

The Chair asked for approval from the Council to submit the Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC) [Annual Report](#) to Governor Carney and the General Assembly in April, 2022, the Council had no revisions or any additions and approved the IRMC Annual Report to be submitted.

The Delaware Department of Education's new Secretary of Education, Mark Holodick, introduced himself to the Council. Secretary Holodick mentioned Early Childhood and Birth to 5 is a top priority. He sees an opportunity for additional relationship building within the Department of Education (DDOE). His vision as Secretary is to strengthen the workforce, through training, appropriate fair compensation, and supporting programs that currently exist. He hopes to take current plans and put them into action to include the Stars Program and Wilmington Learning Collaboration. Starting with the progress of the Wilmington Learning Collaborative, sharing he and Governor Carney, recognize that this has been an issue but "collaboration is the key to any kind of success." The collaboration brings financial resources and the ability to connect to community and faith-based organizations. The process of getting to a Memorandum of Understanding

(MOU), where we can begin to build plans for those schools is underway. He envisions that Early Childhood would play a role.

Next, Secretary Holodick, mentions the significant changes within DDOE including Educator Support has changed to Workforce Support lead by Luke Rhine. There are also several programs developing that involve educator pipeline in the K-12 system, higher Ed, Delaware State University is expanding some of their programming, Delaware Tech is launching a new teacher prep program, and Wilmington University has expressed interest in increasing a more diverse work force and work pool of candidates for Delaware schools. Secretary Holodick, is concerned that instead of working together there is disconnect and because of this Luke Rhine's goal is to ensure we can track and monitor the progress of students in those pathways as aspiring educators.

The chair comments that our group has lots of interest in leveraging the Early Childhood Teacher Academy, there is a plea to expand it into more Delaware high schools. The DECC, Partnership with Professionals Committee is proposing that one of their next topics be a panel on the early childhood workforce focusing on what else can be done. Secretary Holodick said that K-12 is facing similar issues as the early childhood workforce without the same benefits or pay and wants to continue this conversation. Secretary Holodick, recommended to include Luke Rhine, Associate Secretary, Workforce Support and Shana Payne, Director, Delaware Higher Education Office within DDOE to this conversation.

Secretary Holodick then shares his perspective on Local Education Agency (LEA) providers, children with special needs, transitions and inclusiveness within the classroom. He shares that "we really want schools that are diverse in serving populations, and we don't want to segregate kids based on being financially affluent or not." "Moving forward with early childhood let's make sure we don't create a system or advanced a system that does the same." "Leaders have an opportunity to frame things in such a way and create systems that allows for all families to have access to opportunities for their kids, especially in early childhood."

The chair asked if Secretary Holodick could comment on the lawsuit involving Pre-K expansion around the Redding and Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP). Secretary Holodick states that we need to be thoughtful about that because DDOE is a state agency that serves all three counties. As of now we are waiting for more recommendations from leadership, but with mixed delivery we need to ensure that equity remains a major priority.

The Chair welcomes Caitlin Gleason back to DDOE as the new Associate Secretary of Early Childhood Support (ECS) and asks Secretary Holodick what can DECC do as a group and how can we be helpful? Secretary Holodick closes with saying that we need advocates out there and continue to supply valuable planning and reports along with continuing to focus on creating coherent systems that work for all families.

Simon Workman and Jeanna Capito from Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies provide information on the [Cost of Care Tool](#), which was developed based on a requirement in HB 250, committing the state to moving away from a market or price model to a cost model. They remind us that this was based off existing data and the salaries were based off the [Compensation Scale](#). An important finding is that providers need 20% to 80% increase in revenue, to operate at the basic state requirements. Their next steps are to develop a plan, seek approval from the federal Administration for Children and Families, and put it to use. The Chair reiterates this is referencing the Budgeting Bill passed last year, which requires the State of Delaware to move in the direction of approval from the Federal Government to start using true cost for rate settings. A number of issues were identified, including more significant underfunding for family child care, Kent and Sussex Counties, and infants and toddlers (than other types, geographies and age groups).

Elizabeth (Betty Gail) Timm, Director, Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL), provides updates relating to; First phase of the Early Childhood Professional Registry is almost completed and is in the testing and review phase. Once the Professional Registry is fully functioning, childcare professionals will complete

the process of creating a profile. DDOE will have the ability to collect meaningful data on the early childhood professionals working in licensed childcare facilities. Salary supplements for child care workers are anticipated in the coming months, with amounts to be confirmed.

Next, Betty Gail talks about regulations, one being the proposed changes to the family and large family childcare homes which are posted in the [Register of Regulations, March Edition](#), and that a notification was sent out to providers from the OCCL office. [DELACARE Regulations](#), as other programs formulate their standards, OCCL will work with them to promote alignment with the DELACARE Regulations, and make modifications, if needed. The goal is to have a stable regulations document that will support quality and the legislative initiative and minimize the number of changes that providers must absorb.

Betty Gail then provided an updated on OCCL staff vacancies being a licensing specialist in the Wilmington office. That position is currently posted on the [DDOE website](#).

Lastly Betty Gail, updated on DEEDS Early Learning, if anyone is experiencing a problem or has a question for DEEDS, to contact DEEDS staff by using **only one** of the three following ways listed below and include your full name, contact information, and a summary of your request/problem.

- By Phone: 302-735-4236 and leave a message
- By Email: DEEDSEarlyLearning@doe.k12.de.us
- By Website: Complete the Support Request Form located on [Contact Us – Delaware Department of Education](#).

Submitting multiple emails or leaving multiple messages will not result in a quicker response. DEEDS staff monitor these sources daily.

The Office of Early Learning (OEL) update was given by Betty Gail regarding scholarship usage is currently supporting 250 CDA and 111-degree recipients. Next, the Executive Director position for the Early Childhood Innovation Center at Delaware State University was posted last week and closes May 9, 2022, for more information click [HERE](#). Once filled, the Executive Director will work to recruit additional program staff to implement statewide scholarship program, CDA cohorts and other workforce initiatives.

Kristy Sheffler with Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) updated on the Stabilization Funds stating DIEEC has paid out 65 million to programs. For round 4 the FCC has approved 4.6 million for 248 programs and approximately 2.3 million has been paid out in sub grant awards. With a total of 70.6 million. For programs not eligible to participate they will be able to apply and receive stabilization awards. Those details will be finalized in April and posted on the Stabilization Fund website <https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/delaware-early-education-and-child-care-stabilization-fund/>

Question from Jill Karlson: How will this impact non-profit organizations who provide quality assured professional development programs for early childhood educators?

Answer from Kristy Sheffler: The process is still in place, and you're welcome to reach out and submit any curriculum to be approved.

In the Next 2 years, A new opportunity for DIEEC to launch four networks to support family childcare programs who are interested and want to work towards their eligibility in these publicly funded programs as well as future initiatives. More information can be found on the Family Child Care Network flyer found [HERE](#). The next meeting for potentially interested providers is on March 24th at 6:30 PM. If there are any questions, please submit them to DelawareFCCNetworks@udel.edu

DIEEC is facilitating 5 Child Development Associate (CDA) cohorts, these will end in June and another round will be rolling out in the summer. Registration is being accepted now. For more information and registration please click the following links:

- [Family Child Care](#)
- [CDA Professional Preparation](#)

Scholarships are available to support educators who attain their CDA with or without participating in a cohort.

Michele Stant, Chief of Staff, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) provided updates on Governor Carney's, recommended budget in which \$11.5M is dedicated to Purchase of Care (POC) as of right now. DHSS is open to discussing various strategies forward and how to support childcare.

Crystal Sherman, Chief, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, DHSS, Division of Public Health (DPH), gave an update on Home Visiting work. Starting with the Delaware Child Death Review Commission's (CDRC) purpose is to prevent future child and maternal death. They have three fatality review programs across the state. After a few years of meeting the first [Delaware Child Death Review Commission State of Delaware Home Visiting Committee Report](#) was released on March 14, 2022.

Question from Dawn Alexander: Regarding referrals for home visiting. How to make a referral? What system are utilized?

Answer from Crystal Sherman: Referrals and pathways to referrals have been developed by dialing 2-1-1 or visiting [Help Me Grow](#)

Question from Dawn Alexander: Is the Early Head start a part of that referral system and is there a unique identifier to ensure children are not counted twice?

Answer from Crystal Sherman: Yes, Early Head start is a part of it, and as for a unique identifier there is not but the programs meet regularly to avoid any duplicates.

Diane Frentzel, Delaware Readiness Team. Gave updates on the Delaware Department of Education's [Literacy Plan](#) and their Summer Reading Program.

To join a Delaware Readiness Team please click [HERE](#)

- Kent County Readiness Team Meeting - Tuesday, March 29th, 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
 - Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#)
- Sussex County Readiness Team Meeting - Thursday, March 31st, 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
 - Join Zoom Meeting [HERE](#)

For Questions about the Delaware Readiness Teams email dcfrentzel@gmail.com

Making a Difference Conference (virtual) is April 1st, 2022 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Register now – March 25, 2022 for more information and to register click [HERE](#)

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library registration is now over 20,000! Please continue to spread the word! All preschoolers are eligible www.delawarelibraries.org/imagination

Jamie Schneider, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children (deaeyc) reminded everyone that Advocacy Day is April 7th, 2022, starting at 11:30 AM, and will be virtual. For more information and to sign up click [HERE](#) any questions email jamie@deaeyc.org

Lisa Miller, has been announced as the new Executive Director for deaeyc.

Bill Doolittle gives a few updates: 619 school-based inclusions compliance will be readdressed in the spring to summer. Part C move we hope to set a schedule, now that a new Assistant Secretary of Early Childhood Support has been named. Lastly, Purchase of Care, inclusion funding, a methodology is being figured out to ensure the commitments made in grant applications are being fulfilled.

The Chair thanked everyone for joining the meeting. The next council meeting will be [May 17, 2022](#), at **1:00 PM**. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.