



MEETING NOTES

Region 56 Action Council Meeting

Location: Virtual - Zoom

Date & Time: February 23rd, 2023, at 11:00am-12:30pm

Facilitators Present: Madalyn Snowden, Keven Kerr, Erica LoBurgio

Council Members Present:

- Debrah Clark
- Sherry Coe
- Amy Martin
- Amy Loy
- Elizabeth Kaufman
- Stephanie Budziak

Guest Speakers: Cindy Luzeniecki, Early Intervention

Council Members Absent:

- Ellise Boyd-Johnson
- Kathy Fudge-White
- Cherita Tousson-Bowens
- Hassan Von Schlegell
- Paula Kennedy
- Sandifer Thomas
- Stephanie Thompson

Sign In & Goals (5 minutes)

Notes: Region 56 Team welcomed the Action Council, asked everyone to sign in, and presented the Community Agreements and Goals for the meeting. Goals for the meeting were:

Rational Aims:

- Understand how to make an EI referral and general program.
- Discuss EI topics (waitlist, transition, etc.)

Experiential Aim:

- Connect Council members in conversation.



Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

Early Intervention Presentation (40 minutes)

Notes: Region 56 invited guest speaker Cindy Luzeniecki from the Office of Early Intervention to present on Early Intervention. Cindy explained Early Intervention, their locations, the counties that they service, children ages that they serve, and what the program is and why it is needed. Cindy explained how to utilize:

- Child Find – which is an ongoing process through which all children, from birth to 21, are identified, located, and evaluated for EI or special education services.
- Screenings and why they are important to do. The reasons are: increases those who are diagnosed sooner, earlier referral to EI services, significantly increases developmental outcomes, school readiness, and decreases anxiety for families when universally conducted.
- How the referral process works. The way the referral process works is: parent volunteer program, you or your doctor can make a referral call, meeting with service coordinator, a team composed of multidisciplinary professionals will access the child's development, eligibility will be determined, and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- How to qualify for eligibility. Cindy explained how children can qualify: children residing in Illinois who are under three years of age, if a written evaluation reports completed by a multidisciplinary team can confirm the child's eligibility. If a child has a developmental delay, and the delay is 30% or greater in one or more of the areas of childhood development. If there is a physical or mental condition which typically results in developmental delay.
- The cost for families of EI. Cindy explained that EI program funds cover the costs of assessments to determine if a child qualifies. EI services are paid by health insurance or program funds. EI is available to everyone, regardless of income.
- Transition. Cindy explained that the EI program ends for families when the child turns three years of age. The service coordinator begins the process at 2.6 years old, to ensure a family receives the appropriate services and supports. EI does provide extended services according to the birthday of the child and when they turn three years of age.
- Waitlists. Cindy explained that EI does not generate a waitlist, instead the children are put on a "needs list." The list is generated from the IFSP and list parent choice for receiving services.



- Providers. Cindy explained that providers work for a company or independently, and they are contracted through our office and do not work directly with EI.
- Services. Cindy explained that services are all provided in the natural environment, home or child care provider.

Decisions made n/a

Next Steps: n/a

Strengths, Needs, and Recommendations (40 minutes)

Notes: Action Council were asked to brainstorm / answer the following questions / concerns:

- Strengths
 - We have a strong, passionate, and educated workforce wanting to make changes and improvements to EI.
 - EI has a large group of strong providers.
 - EI has been transparent on the information that comes in and out of the office.
 - Caseloads are large, so there have been new hires. Bringing in new coordinators and training them in a hybrid method.
 - Live video visits are working and empowered many parents.
 - Partnering with Joliet Public Library for screenings.
 - Many collaborations (but need to condense and streamline information).
- Barriers
 - Workforce
 - There has been a small turnover rate.
 - There was a wage increase.
 - Need to hire at least three more staff to be at full capacity with caseloads.
 - Family schedule, pay releases, LVV/in person preferences, day care/home)
 - Turnover
 - Needs List
 - DCFS (more collaboration) regulations inhibiting EI providers in classrooms.
 - Knowledge on how to access and what the program is (Child Find).
- Needs



- Huge gap with access to full day programming for children with IEPs, lack of support after half day program.
- Private child cares need to be involved in EI for support.
- Cohesive screening opportunities Region wide.
- We don't have a person to take the information to everyone.
- Recommendations
 - Person in school district that sit out in the community to bring information back to district (ROEs possible grant).
 - Wrap around money Birth to Five Illinois.
 - Cohesive communication.
- What was the impact of COVID?
 - LVV options support parent coaching and more meeting attendance.
 - Decreased screening opportunities.

Decisions made: n/a

Next Steps: n/a

Closing / Scheduling, and Questions (5 minutes)

Notes: Region 56 Team thanked the Action Council Members for attending the meeting and participating. Next meeting dates and reminders were offered during the meeting. Cindy shared her email with the Action Council members for additional questions or concerns.

Next Meeting: Region 56 Team announced when the next meetings will be held.

Wednesday, March 15th, 2023

11:00am-1:00pm

Action Council Meeting

ECEC and Community Collaborations

Wednesday, March 30th, 2023

11:00am-12:30pm, via Zoom

Action Council Resource Meeting

Deanna Hill, CCAP

Decisions made: n/a



Follow-up/Next Steps: Region 56 explained how to have access to the Google slides / drive to add any information or questions as they arrive after the meeting and to be addressed for next meeting.