

# State Interagency Coordinating Council

April 12, 2021 Minutes

9:00 AM-12pm

Remote Zoom Meeting

**Cynthia Jackson**

*ICC Chair/Provider*

**Leona Adamczyk**

*ICC Vice*

**Ann Gionet**

*Dept. of Public Health*

**Tiffany Allain**

*Parent Representative*

**Kim Nilson**

*Dept. for Children and Families*

**Michelle Rinaldi**

*Parent Representative*

**Elaine Balsley**

*ReachOut*

**Alice Ridgway**

*Office of Early Childhood*

**Senator Mary Abrams**

*State Senator*

**Shanda Easley**

*Parent representative*

**Sharon Marie**

*Dept. of Aging & Disabilities Services*

**Ginny, Mahoney**

*Dept. of Social Services*

**Anne Giordano**

*Education Connection*

**Carol Peltier**

*American School for the Deaf*

**Louis Tallarita**

*SDE-Homeless Children*

**Andrea Brinnel**

*SDE-619*

**Karen Pascale**

*Early Head Start*

**Myra Watnick**

*Rehabilitation Associates, Inc.*

**Ann Milanese, M.D.**

*American Academy of Pediatrics*

**Representative Liz Linehan**

*House of Representatives*

**Tammy Venanga**

*Dept. Of Developmental Services*

**Mary Beth Bruder**

*UCEDD*

**Lisa Opert**

*Parent Representative*

**Robb Dunn**

*Parent Representative*

**David Gonzalez-Rice**

*Parent representative*

**Lauren Black**

*Parent Representative*

**Melissa Roberts**

*Department of Insurance*

ICC Members Present: Leona Adamczyk, Andrea Brinnel, Anne Giordano, Cindy Jackson, Elaine Balsley, Ginny Mahoney, Myra Watnick, Alice Ridgway, David Gonzalez-Rice, Robb Dunn, Lisa Opert, Lauren Black, Anne Giordano, Dr. Ann Milanese, Gabriela Freye (alternate for Mary Beth Bruder), and Senator Mary Abrams

ICC Members Absent: Michelle Rinaldi, Representative Linehan, Melissa Roberts, Shanda Easley, Mary Beth Bruder (Gabriela Freye attending for UCEDD), Kim Nilson, Karen Pascale, Tiffany Allain, Carol Peltier, Louis Tallarita, Tammy Venanga, Melissa Roberts, Kim Nilson

CPAC represented by Adriana Fontaine and Jane Hampton

CDI represented by Kareena DuPlessis

Meeting called to order at 9:00 AM by Cindy Jackson ICC Chair

**Introductions:** ICC members in attendance introduced.

**Public Comment:** John Flanders spoke on behalf of Special Education Equity for Kids of Connecticut (SEEK-CT). Mr. Flanders shared that SEEK-CT as well as a number of sister organizations including the Office of the Child Advocate, Center for Children's Advocacy, AFCAMP, and others have been working on a number of issues related to the education of infants toddlers and young children. Mr. Flanders requested an opportunity to discuss at future ICC meeting to more fully present his workgroup's activities for the past year and moving forward: (1) make possible for Birth to Three providers to more fully participate by making recommendations in transition process for Special Education services, (2) allow B-3 services to continue to age 5, and (3) to address families not being able to receive all services on IEP due to Covid. Cindy Jackson recommended referring this to Legislative/Fiscal committee and scheduling a meeting with Myra Watnick, Elaine Balsley, Alice Ridgway, Andrea Brinnel, Leona Adamczyk, Cindy Jackson, and Mr. Flanders for further discussion.

**Old Business:**

Approval of the February 8, 2021 ICC Minutes: motion to accept and motion seconded, none opposed

**New Business:**

Committee updates shared regarding work completed since February 8, 2021 ICC meeting:

**Legislative/Fiscal Committee** Watching SB 02 with regards to (1) continued service for children turning 3 between the months of May until September, when the school year begins again, (2) eliminating family cost participation fees, and (3) B-3 role in transition. Myra Watnick contacted Senator Abrams to share information on procedures for family cost participation. Cindy Jackson wrote a letter from the ICC in support of Birth-5 system of supports and the Early Intervention after 3 option for supporting children with summer birthdays. The committee is gathering information to present on impact of reducing/eliminating family cost participation fees.

**Education and Outreach Committee** Today's meeting is Family Focus and parents' stories and concerns will be highlighted. Leona Adamczyk shared there are 11 parent presentations scheduled for today's meeting.

**System Support/Personnel Development Committee** has developed a draft survey regarding subject matter experts at the programmatic level and topical training interests. The survey has been formatted to allow for quick response and data review once returned. The committee is hoping to better assess how programs can help support their staff and what are the current needs. Survey will be sent out soon. Anne Giordano reported the committee has been looking at enhancing documents that are given to parents at transition. Appreciation expressed to Jen Buffington for her work in creating a graphic handout about transition for parents. It was discussed moving the handout over to Education and Outreach Committee for their feedback as well as sharing with the Autism Community of Practice group as they had expressed a need for this.

Family Focus- Parent Stories: Live parent stories through Zoom were shared by Jaime Ferik, David Gonzalez-Rice, Katherine Carrigan, Kate McOmber, Jessica L., Lisa Opert, Troy, and Tony Breedlove. An audio message with family picture displayed was recorded by Melissa B. and presented. Cindy Jackson read letter from Ingrid H. to share.

Adriana Fontaine, CPAC/Family Connections: Expressed appreciation for the families that shared their stories today. Reported referrals have increased, with 83 new referrals. CPAC staff have been supporting families around: better understanding of evaluation reports, immigration status concerns, and timelines for referral to Part B. CPAC has hired a new bilingual parent support person. Continued work with Reachout for parent series.

Koleen Kerski shared family survey data requested by ICC. 2020 survey results reviewed and can be found under indicator 4 at <https://www.birth23.org/wp-content/uploads/PR/CT-01-SPP-PART-C-FFY-2019-20-FINAL.pdf>.

Results 2019 (2020 survey) Early Intervention helped the family:

91% know their rights.

90% communicate their child's needs.

97% helped their child develop and learn.

The plan going forward for 2021 survey (for year 2020):

- Data has been run on 2083 eligible families, packaged and sent for processing.
- Shipping date is 4/12/21 to the address indicated by each provider, as a signature will be required on delivery. Tracking will be available as of shipment date.
- Submission is support both by paper or online electronically.
- Survey are due for the August ICC/Provider Meeting.

8 Parent comments from previous surveys were shared.

Lead Agency report by Alice Ridgway. See attached.

Committee reports outs:

**Legislative/fiscal** topics: SB 02. Elaine Balsley and Myra Watnick would like to connect with Alice Ridgway and Maggie Adair to discuss further. While the Lead Agency supports the governor's budget, the ICC is a separate entity and will continue to advocate for children and their family from their unique perspective. The Lead Agency is available to assist with data requests from the ICC.

**Education and Outreach** topics: Further discussion around how families can support families, including family connections through CPAC and First Steps through CPAC. There was discussion around creating an FAQ document to be posted on the website for families and the committee will connect with Lead Agency to make them aware of website navigation challenges.

**System Support/Personnel Development** topics: Committee discussion included incorporating parent reflections from today to enhance program development going forward. Discussed expanding the current graphic handout about transition. Discussion around the reasons children were found not eligible at initial evaluation but eligible the next referral as well as ways to follow up on these children originally not eligible, such as phone calls to check in and remind of option to refer again.

**Next Meeting: June 14, 2021 (tentatively remote at time of writing)**



### **State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)**

*Parents will be able to describe their child's abilities and challenges more effectively as a result of their participation in Early Intervention.*

#### FFY20-25 SPP / APR SSIP

- During the development of the initial SPP/ APR and SSIP, we reported ample stakeholder engagement but with the new SPP / APR (which includes the SSIP) we are seeking more engagement from historically or currently marginalized groups on each indicator. In addition states are being encouraged to offer a wider variety of stakeholder engagement activities to align with different learning and participation styles. Suggestions are welcome to Nicole.
- The SPP / APR may have new baseline and targets based on the current data as impacted by the COVID PHE. This will be discussed more fully during the June ICC meeting.
- The lead agency will also schedule meetings to review and update the logic model, evaluation plan and Early Childhood Systems Framework self-assessment.
- The current State-identified Measurable Result (SiMR above) can continue in the new SSIP, or it can be modified based on stakeholder input.

#### Current SPP / APR / SSIP

- Connecticut's FFY19-20 SSIP was submitted three days early.
- The 19-20 public reporting tables for each indicator by program are on [Birth23.org/how-are-we-doing/pr/](https://Birth23.org/how-are-we-doing/pr/)
- Determinations will be made by June and summarized at the next meeting.

#### *Education and Outreach*

- Sabrina Crowe began on February 26, 2021 and has been working closely with Koleen.
- The Lead Agency met with the Department of Health (DPH) and 211 Child Development to discuss ways of collecting specific information for families with children referred with concerns about hearing who are refusing referral or being evaluated but refusing services. The meetings between the OEC, DPH, and 211 Child Development will be ongoing.
- The Lead Agency connected with pediatric resident physicians to schedule Early Intervention (EI) shadow visits with experienced providers to gain an understanding of EI, which will enable new pediatricians to explain EI to families upon their referral to the program.
- The Birth to Three and Early Head Start workgroup has convened two meetings about updating the MOU to focus on coordinating supports for dually-supported families, reducing systems barriers, and increasing referral to both programs. The UConn Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) is facilitating this workgroup. An additional three meetings are scheduled before the draft document will be made available for comment.

#### *Personnel Development*

- Activity-Based Teaming implementation is moving forward with programs doing more training, focus groups, and technical assistance through their mentor coaches. The mentor coach community of practice continues to be well received and is reportedly very useful for supporting staff in this role, providing resources, and addressing fidelity.
- All EIS programs have the requested devices to provide iPads and connectivity to families as part of the Governor's Education Emergency Relief (GEER) fund. New England Assistive Technology (NEAT) has a few extra iPads in inventory for use as needed.
- The OEC has contracted Instructure to use the CANVAS learning management system so this new platform will house all of the Birth to Three learning modules in one place.
- Linda Bamonte recently completed National Fidelity Coach Certification recertification for another two years and Koleen Kerski will be certified by the end of April.

### Fiscal Enhancements

- The OEC received approval from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to apply for a Part C extension as part of its annual grant application. The extension would support families with children who have third birthdays between May 1<sup>st</sup> and the start of the school year. It cannot begin until OSEP approves the policy change which is out for public comment until May 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Elisabeth Teller worked with the fiscal department to create an expense report for programs to complete annually. She is also working with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to review the audit protocol measures as they will be used as the basis for an OEC audit protocol. It is hoped that this process will help EIS programs to prepare for Medicaid audits.
- PCG will begin refunding Family Cost Participation (FCP) fees to 18 families because it was identified that insurance payments plus FCP fees were more than the cost of EI. This will now be done annually.
- The American Rescue Plan (ARP) includes \$250M for IDEA Part C. The timing and rules for the use of these funds have not been developed, but the Lead Agency was notified that it will likely be an addition to the regular Part C allocation with all the same restrictions.

### Leadership Grant

- Members of the leadership academy began working on projects to create local-level system changes.
- The next group will begin in the fall, and recruitment will begin over the summer.
- The Annual Performance Report for this grant is due to OSEP on May 7<sup>th</sup> and is being developed primarily by the UCONN UCEDD as they are administering this grant for the lead agency.

### Personnel Development Grant

- The OSEP PD grant (RAINBOW) mentor coaching has begun with a total of 38 mentor coaches supporting 92 family coaches in all but one program. They are submitting reports and logs bimonthly to the Lead Agency. Mentor coaches are providing training as well. The grant's advisory board will be meeting in May to plan the second-year activities and how to connect the components into a system.
- The Annual Performance Report for this grant (due to OSEP on May 7<sup>th</sup> as well) is currently being reviewed by the grant's state lead.

### Other

- Part C Program staff were listed in CDC guidance about early childhood education vaccine eligibility but as of April 1, 2021, vaccine eligibility in CT was opened to include everyone 16 and older.
- The Lead Agency has been working with the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) regarding possible concerns around compensatory services as a result of missed visits due to the COVID-19 PHE.

### Data

The enrollment and fiscal data requested by the ICC on a regular basis is attached.

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Birth to Three System Monthly Enrollment Data

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March*
<b>Calls to 211CD</b>	962	812	955	985	902	919	1059	991	1013
Percent compared to CY2019 average (1113)	86%	73%	86%	88%	81%	83%	95%	89%	91%
<i>Families declining the referral to B23<sup>1</sup></i>	165	134	144	168	179	171	163	153	51
Percent compared to CY2019 average (199)	83%	67%	72%	84%	90%	86%	82%	77%	na
Percent of calls to 211CD (CY2019 average was 17%)	17%	17%	15%	17%	20%	19%	15%	15%	na
<b>Referrals to Birth to Three</b>	797	678	811	817	723	748	894	838	962
Percent compared to CY2019 average (913)	87%	74%	89%	89%	79%	82%	98%	92%	105%
<i>Families declining eligibility evaluations<sup>2</sup></i>	80	88	82	104	97	88	79	101	78
Percent compared to CY2019 average (67)	119%	131%	122%	155%	145%	131%	118%	151%	116%
Percent of B23 referrals (CY2019 average was 7%)	10%	13%	10%	13%	13%	12%	9%	12%	8%
<b>Initial Eligibility Determinations</b>	626	631	655	749	655	668	678	706	822
Percent compared to CY2019 average (843)	73%	74%	77%	88%	77%	78%	79%	83%	96%
<b>Determined to be Eligible</b>	473	448	492	565	491	496	524	535	646
Percent compared to CY2019 average (570)	83%	79%	86%	99%	86%	87%	92%	94%	113%
Percent Eligible	76%	71%	75%	75%	75%	74%	77%	76%	79%
Percent compared to CY2019 average (68%)	8%	3%	7%	7%	7%	6%	9%	8%	11%
<i>Families leaving Part C in the month before an initial IFSP meeting<sup>3</sup></i>	29	50	35	38	33	46	35	35	29
Percent compared to CY2019 average (55)	53%	91%	64%	69%	60%	84%	64%	64%	53%
Percent of B23 those eligible (CY2019 average was 10%)	6%	11%	7%	7%	7%	9%	7%	7%	4%
<b>Initial IFSP meeting held during the month</b>	432	412	429	512	455	472	482	459	550
Percent compared to CY2019 average (516)	84%	80%	83%	99%	88%	91%	93%	89%	107%
<i>Families leaving Part C after the initial IFSP meeting but before EITS<sup>3</sup></i>	13	20	20	13	19	10	16	13	12
Percent compared to CY2019 average (15)	87%	133%	133%	87%	127%	67%	107%	87%	80%
Percent of all Exits	2%	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	4%	3%	3%
<b>Eligible children who received an EITS in the month</b>	4734	4751	4434	4549	4542	4623	4716	4808	4665
Percent compared to CY2019 average (5177)	91%	92%	86%	88%	88%	89%	91%	93%	90%
Average hours per child per month	6.4	5.6	6.0	6.0	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.3
Percent compared to CY2019 average (7.3)	87%	76%	83%	83%	75%	78%	75%	74%	73%
<b>Eligible children with an ASD who received an EITS in the month</b>	551	550	528	515	515	532	536	554	566
Percent compared to CY2019 average (676)	82%	81%	78%	76%	76%	79%	79%	82%	84%
Average hours per child per month	18.3	15.8	17.0	17.2	15.7	16.2	14.6	14.3	13.0
Percent compared to CY2019 average (24.9)	73%	63%	68%	69%	63%	65%	59%	57%	52%
<b>Eligible children without an ASD who received an EITS in the month</b>	4202	4217	3938	4059	4062	4121	4124	4292	4135
Percent compared to CY2019 average (4529)	93%	93%	87%	90%	90%	91%	91%	95%	91%
Average hours per child per month	4.8	4.3	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3
Percent compared to CY2019 average (4.7)	102%	91%	98%	98%	89%	94%	94%	91%	91%
<b>Children in families who exited before age 3<sup>3</sup></b>	261	327	249	220	183	196	191	193	172
Percent compared to CY2019 average (224)	117%	146%	111%	98%	82%	88%	85%	86%	77%
<b>Children in families who exited at age 3<sup>4</sup></b>	358	397	264	316	269	256	259	227	253
Percent compared to CY2019 average (322)	111%	123%	82%	98%	84%	80%	80%	70%	79%
<b>Children in Families who exited at age 3 as eligible for Part B</b>	196	235	160	202	177	171	173	153	172
Percent compared to CY2019 average (225)	87%	104%	71%	90%	79%	76%	77%	68%	76%

\*March data preliminary as of 4/11/21

All counts are counts of cases and include may include referrals within 45 days of age 3.

- 1) includes parent declined, referred to LEA, DCF no concerns and unable to contact
- 2) includes parent declined, moved out of CT, deceased and unable to contact
- 3) EITS stands for Early Intervention "Treatment" Services vs EIS (also evaluations, assessments, and IFSP meetings)
- 3) includes parent withdrew, moved out of CT, deceased and unable to contact
- 4) includes eligible for Part B, not eligible, and eligibility not determined/LEA not included

Connecticut Birth to Three System Fiscal Data Report

OEC Birth to Three System Direct Service Expenditures <sup>1</sup>												
Invoice	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21
Paid in	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Escrow	1,293,685	1,636,423	1,754,339	1,672,664	1,505,397	1,378,655	1,484,337	1,487,752	1,535,046			
GAP	602,700	601,700	579,400	514,200	508,100	342,400	349,300	357,300	365,000			
Interpretation	4,985	15,769	10,903	5,848	11,901	33,181	6,448	19,012	18,830			
ATech + Other	1,313	3,174	239	22,561	9,100	12,420	8,573	7,622	3,542			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,902,684</b>	<b>2,257,065</b>	<b>2,344,881</b>	<b>2,215,274</b>	<b>2,034,498</b>	<b>1,766,656</b>	<b>1,848,657</b>	<b>1,871,686</b>	<b>1,922,418</b>			

Commercial Insurance Payments <sup>2</sup>												
	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21
Claims Paid	409,298	267,628	267,714	232,936	239,143	299,948	156,164	188,702	267,370			
Amount Billed	2,314,299	1,200,849	1,322,520	1,014,867	899,400	1,030,995	767,961	1,113,045	1,495,662			
%Paid/Billed	18%	22%	20%	23%	27%	29%	20%	17%	18%			
Billing Fees	-	24,619	-	31,890	21,295	34,911	-	21,155	12,395			

OEC Birth to Three State Allocation Budget <b>Actual &amp; Projections</b> [Surplus / (Deficit)] <sup>3</sup>												
Invoices	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21
Report	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Deficit Proj	(540,890)	(1,472,893)	(1,213,464)	(569,220)	463,688	347,791	549,604	586,270	586,479			

Direct Service Hours <sup>4</sup>				
FY	18 Act.	19 Act.	20 Act.	21 Est.
Jun	10,426	36,792	39,459	33,683
Jul	9,994	36,942	42,673	34,273
Aug	10,186	38,265	41,179	30,114
Sept	10,106	35,742	42,384	31,226
Oct	10,355	41,640	44,791	31,724
Nov	34,873	37,810	38,150	29,208
Dec	30,831	33,032	49,433	30,734
Jan	35,579	41,645	42,772	30,865
Feb	33,588	37,283	41,300	30,888
Mar	36,522	40,631	32,283	32,283
Apr	37,430	42,542	33,630	38,675
May	39,576	44,478	32,416	40,519
<b>Total</b>	<b>299,466</b>	<b>466,801</b>	<b>480,470</b>	<b>431,367</b>
<b>% Chg</b>	<b>149.50%</b>	<b>55.88%</b>	<b>2.93%</b>	<b>-10.22%</b>

Actual  
Estimated

- 1) Based on Budget Tracking system as of March 2021
- 2) Based on data from PCG using date paid not date of service
- 3) Based on monthly estimates by the OEC including a list of assumptions and data that change frequently
- 4) Based on reconciled invoices (actual) and estimates using a list of assumptions using available information