



**NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)  
Membership Meeting  
March 7, 2013**

**Members:**

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Marsha Basloe	Maggie Evans	Linda Landsman	Sophia Pappas
Evelyn Blanck	Robert Frawley*	Patti Lieberman	Patty Persell
Kate Breslin	Doris Fromberg	Dina Lieser	Melanie Pores
Sherry Cleary*	Shari Gruber	Karen McGraw	Iwona Ostrowska-Sheedy
Nancy Cupolo	Liz Hood	Mary McHugh	Sandy Rybaltowski
Rachel de Long	Jacquelyn Jones	Meg McNiff	Carol Saginaw
Chris Deyss	Ira Katzenstein	Janice Molnar	Mary Shaheen
Andre Eaton	Kristen Kerr	Donna Noyes	Mary Sontheimer

\* Co-chair

**Guests:**

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Laurie Brotman	Tovah Gottesman	Jenn O'Connor	Lynn Siebert
Lauri Brugger	Kathleen Halas	Mary Anne Peabody	Rachel Theise
Katie Campos	Betty Holcomb	Ian Rosenblum	Lonnie Threatte
Dee Dwyer	Britt Myrhol-Clarke	Amy Rudat	

**Staff:**

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Phil Alotta	Barbara Hogan	Renee Nasadoski
Liz Belsito	Maggie McGlynn	Susan Perkins
Madeline Hannan	Fredda Merzon	Bridget Walsh

**Updates Child Care and Development Fund State Plan for FFY 2014-2015**

Janice Molnar reported that OCFS is working to develop New York's Child Care and Development Fund plan to submit to the Federal Office of Child Care. The plan is due July 1, 2013 and covers Federal Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015. A draft of the plan will be posted on the OCFS website no later than April 3, 2013. Janice thanked everyone who assisted with parts of the State's plan. Public hearings will be conducted after the plan is posted on the OCFS website. The first public hearing will be at OCFS in Rensselaer on April 23 from 10am to 2pm. Additional public hearings will be held around the state on April 26 and April 30. OCFS is actively seeking input. If people are unable to make the in-person meetings, they may submit written testimony. See <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main> for more information.

Janice reviewed the three sections of the State plan:

- Part I: Administration (including CCDF Program Integrity and Accountability, Emergency Preparedness)
- Part II: Subsidy Program Administration (including Eligibility Criteria, Sliding Fee Scale, Parental Choice, Payment Rates for Child Care Services)
- Part III: Health and Safety and Quality Improvement Activities (licensing, early learning guidelines, quality rating and improvement system, Professional Development and Workforce Initiatives)

New York has been recognized as the strongest state in the nation around child care emergency response planning. Janice is proud of the work OCFS did (and continues to do) with child care programs and providers impacted by Super storm Sandy.

## **Innovative Strategies: Governor's Prekindergarten Plan**

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Katie Campos, Assistant Secretary for Education, Ian Rosenblum, Director of Policy Coordination, and Lonnie Threatte, Assistant Secretary for Higher Education, presented the Governor's plan to implement high quality pre-kindergarten programs that would provide full day pre-kindergarten services to the highest need four-year-olds in the state. The Governor's plan is based on recommendations from the Education Commission's recent report. Ms. Campos attributed the inclusion of high quality pre-kindergarten within the Commission's report to the extensive advocacy of the ECAC, whose members provided over 1000 documented testimonies to the Commission along with providing extensive research on the value of high quality early education services as an education and economic development strategy. Both Ms. Campos and Mr. Rosenblum emphasized the need for the ECAC to continue providing support, especially in the form of research that supports the standards of high quality early childhood education and evaluation of those standards.

Key components of the Governor's plan are to allocate \$25million of the education budget through a competitive grant process for either new or existing pre-kindergarten programs to offer children with high needs full day prekindergarten. The plan also includes quality indicators, including environmental assessments, teacher certification, and positive child-teacher interaction. The timeline of the plan, if approved within the state budget, would be for a Request for Proposals to be posted in May 2013. Applications would be due in June so that successful applicants can implement the full day prekindergarten programs in the 2013-2014 school year. School districts will have the option of operating full day prekindergarten programs directly or in partnership with community based organizations. It is expected that this funding will continue in subsequent years and will not take away from existing prekindergarten funding levels.

During the question and answer period, ECAC members made recommendations to enrich the Governor's prekindergarten plan including providing transportation and addressing the needs of English Language Learners and children with special needs. ECAC members also advocated for the Governor's plan to include the implementation of QUALITYstarsNY. Ms. Campos and Mr. Rosenblum emphasized the desire to align the pre-kindergarten initiative with QUALITYstarsNY standards.. The idea of approaching the business sector to support expanding high quality funding for pre-kindergarten was also proposed by the ECAC membership, highlighting the benefits of early education to a strong workforce. The ECAC also offered its quality improvement and professional development resources to support programs funded through the Governor's plan.

The discussion ended with the Governor's staff requesting that the ECAC continue to support the expansion of prekindergarten. ECAC members will reach out to the state legislature requesting that they support the \$25million allocated for prekindergarten in the executive budget. Bob and Sherry will provide guidance to the membership on contacting members of the legislature.

## **Work Group Presentation: NYC DOE PreKindergarten Programs aligned with QUALITYstarsNY**

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Meg McNiff, Project Coordinator, Office of Early Learning, NYS Education Department and Sophia Pappas, Executive Director, Office of Early Childhood, New York City Department of Education presented an overview of the exciting work happening in New York City which aligns QUALITYstarsNY expectations and reporting requirements with those of the City Department of Education.

Meg passed out information on the status of QUALITYstarsNY program participation by county around the state (see attached). She stressed the importance of alignment between community-based early learning programs with their local school districts; and alignment between school-based early learning programs and the K-12 structure. The QUALITYstarsNY Program Standards outline the indicators of quality – and help programs and providers take action to improve the quality of experiences offered to children.

Sophia Pappas outlined the systems alignment in NYC DOE sponsored programs. QUALITYstarsNY has provided a consistent method to measure success and accountability. It has also offered parents a standardized way to view program quality. Sophia has differentiated the professional development available to early care and learning program staff by using the Quality Improvement Specialists strategically, which has made it possible to stretch limited resources a bit further.

In summary, both Meg and Sophia stressed that it is important for school districts to understand QUALITYstarsNY and what it can offer them in helping to improve the quality of the early care and learning programs in their communities.

### **Work Group Presentation: Promoting Healthy Development (Children’s Institute)**

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Lauri Brugger and Mary Anne Peabody presented on the status of activities for the ECAC Social-Emotional Development Support Consultant Work Plan being conducted by the Children’s Institute. In addition to background information pertaining to the needs of young children and related systemic supports for their social-emotional health, they discussed the following areas of focus:

- Professional development models and methods for a wide range of professionals working with young children (concentrating on children from pre-birth to age five);
- Evidence-based early childhood development program curricula and staff supports that inform support of young children’s social-emotional development; and,
- Screening systems including developmental and social-emotional screening tools for young children and maternal depression screening.

The Children’s Institute has been communicating with key stakeholders and leaders from local communities in New York, and other states, including investigating other states’ experience with infant mental health credential systems; creating a compendium of screening instruments, with implementation protocols, systemic processes and recommendations; developing research-based resources, with guidelines and recommendations, on curricula selection for early care and learning programs; and writing a document on social emotional development consultation and reflective practice in the context of primary care/medical home, human services, and early childhood development programming.

Finally, the Children’s Institute will continue to work with the Promoting Healthy Development Work Group to finalize their work, plan for proper and effective dissemination of materials, and provide the ECAC with an analysis of strengths and barriers in relation to activities that support children’s social-emotional health, policy and practice.

### **ECAC Future Planning – Moving Forward**

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Liz Belsito described the diagram, “ECAC Activities and Accomplishments” . The diagram illustrates the four key ECAC focus areas (healthy children, early learning, strong families, and coordinated and responsive systems) providing significant accomplishments and work in each area and lists the current related federal and state priorities and initiatives aligned with ECAC’s goals. The group was given time to review the diagram. They were then given a blank copy of the same diagram and asked to make revisions and additions to fill in any gaps, particularly related to current initiatives aligned with ECAC’s goals. The blank versions were collected by Liz.

Bob Frawley reported that the federal grant that supports ECAC activities ends July 31<sup>st</sup> with a 90 day payout period (through October). There is also \$100,000 from BUILD for continuing the quarterly meetings. Renewed funding from the feds may be possible, but not certain at this time.

To focus attention on the future, Maggie asked the group to discuss, at their tables: “Where do we lead? Where do we add value?” Members took notes on color-coded paper and each table shared their thoughts with the whole group. The exercise was repeated with new prompts: “How would you redesign the ECAC based on our leadership and added value in the areas of: structure, implementation, and what makes us valuable partners?” The group contributions for both exercises were recorded; see attached.

### **ParentCorps – Partnership with NYC Department of Education with support from OMH**

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Laurie Brotman, from NYU Langone Medical Center, provided an overview of ParentCorps, highlighting the common vision and many of the same guiding principles as the ECAC.

ParentCorps is funded by a public-private partnership with the goal of helping children succeed in school, at home and in their communities. It is a universal prevention intervention that recognizes the diversity of children and families and the primacy of parents. ParentCorps helps families promote children’s social, emotional and self-regulatory skill development and effectively partners with early childhood educators to advance children’s long term academic success, mental health and physical development. Dr. Brotman highlighted her longitudinal research that demonstrates improvement in learning, conduct problems, decreased obesity, improved parenting skills and increased school engagement.

Dr. Brotman presented some new findings that will be released shortly in the journal Pediatrics. In a randomized school trial they saw significant improvement in class behavior management and class productivity. There were also significant effects for families that showed equal or better improvements in some measures of family functioning. The study also showed improvement in academic achievement comparable to the Success for All program.

The New York State Office of Mental Health has provided a grant to support implementation of ParentCorps in targeted UPK programs in NYC. This work has the support of the ECAC. The Promoting Healthy Development Work Group will continue to provide guidance and direction on the implementation and sustainability of this evidence-based prevention intervention.

**Next meeting: Thursday, June 27, 2013 at the Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY.**