

FSSAC QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

Family Support Services Advisory Council

Date | time Friday, December 3, 2021 9:00 – 11:30 AM | *Meeting called to order by* Chair Laura McKee

Type of Meeting: Quarterly Interagency Coordinating Council

Note Taker: Wendy Studt

In Attendance

Members: Laura McKee, Bonnie Ramage, Abigail Harris, Breanne Main, Carol Clayton-Bye, Daylinda Radley, Karen Thornton, Hollin Buck, Karen Underwood, Laura Christiaens, Dr. Lux, Amber Bell, Jessie Counts, Susan Brown, Kathy Rich, Brandi Loch, Jack O'Connor, Majority Leader Sue Vinton, Leslie Lee

Members Excused: Stephanie Goble, Catherine Murphy, Patty Butler

Guests: Lora Cowee, Kalli Decker, Jackie Mohler, Brittany Tronaas

Members Absent: Keira Kirschner

State Staff: Sandy Cade, Wendy Studt, Sally Tilleman

Approval of October 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Minutes approved.

Introductions, Ground Rules, and Agenda Review

Laura McKee led introductions, the agenda review, and a review of the FSSAC Ground Rules.

Ground Rules:

- Watch your air time.
 - No axes to grind.
 - Follow FSSAC Guidelines.
 - Respect for all comments: all voices are heard as we work together.
 - Assume positive intentions and take responsibility for impact.
 - Be here now.
 - Listen to learn – active form of participation.
-

Family Story: Parent representatives shared updates of their families.

FSSAC Strategic Plan

Review of the FSSAC's mission, vision, and core values. The FSSAC's work is organized into five goals with supporting objectives.

Goal: Workforce – Increase multidisciplinary engagement and collaboration.

Break out group (Dr. Lux, Hollin Buck, Karen Thornton, Daylinda Radley, Laura McKee, Karen Underwood, Carol Clayton-Bye, Jack O'Connor, guests Kalli Decker and Jackie Mohler) determined they would meet before the next scheduled FSSAC meeting to develop an action plan outlining how multidisciplinary teams come together with efficiency to meet the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements. The team requested documentation of the federal requirements including multidisciplinary team roles, Part C eligibility document, and the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). Wendy will provide those items to Dr Lux and Hollin Buck.

Goal: Coordination – Improve transitions for children and families exiting Part C services and supports.

- 1) Break out group (Kathy Rich, Laura Christiaens, Leslie Lee, Sue Vinton, Jessie Counts, Brandi Loch, Sandy Cade, Abby Harris, Nicole Goeddel, and guests Lora Cowee, Rebecca Richards and John Gorton) met twice in between FSSAC meetings. The work group included State staff, family members, additional parent voices such as the MT Empowerment Center, and the Office of Public Instruction. To develop the Transition brochure developed by Nicole Goeddel (attached), the team shared already existing templates and identified what they believed was most needed and information that was hardest to understand. The team requests the feedback of the FSSAC as members review the brochure. Their next steps are to finalize a glossary acronym list linking to QR codes in the brochure and an easy-to-understand parental rights document.

The Council agreed to continue work on the two goals before moving the work focus to additional goals and objectives.

Part C American Rescue Plan Buckets

First priorities:

Child Find Campaign (\$205,000) Increase screening and coordinated services for eligible children, especially those who may be further delayed due to the pandemic. Increase the number of Child Find events throughout the state, including targeted outreach to pediatricians, childcare facilities, home visitors, and other programs serving children ages 0-36 months.

Child Find Direct Service (\$427,537) Child Find Pilot working in conjunction with the Office of Special Education Programs and WestEd. Collaborative Child Find activities within an agency's catchment area to promote referrals to the Part C Program resulting in increased child count. Increase screening and coordinated services for eligible children, especially those who may be further delayed due to the pandemic. Targeted outreach to pediatricians, childcare facilities, home visitors and other programs serving children 0-36 months within the agency's catchment area. Resources to provide children to address the COVID-19 gap and support smooth transitions.

Family Stories (\$50,000) Develop online videos describing families' experiences in Part C Early Intervention.

Family Outcomes Survey (\$50,000) Development of an online application to provide the Family Outcomes Survey that meets the regulatory requirements and increases participation in the Family Outcome Survey.

Workforce Recruitment and Retention (\$125,000) Support the retention of current employees doing work on behalf of Part C and recruitment of Family Support Specialists, Family Support Specialist Supervisors, and Intake Coordinators.

Next priorities:

Needs Assessment (\$250,000) Engage a third-party consultant to conduct a targeted needs assessment focused on equity and access for children, 0-8, within the early childhood system, including a focus on children with

special needs. This includes an assessment of program effectiveness, service gaps and duplications, funding mechanisms.

- › Identify subgroups and regions that Montana determines have limited access to Part C services.
- › Streamlining evaluation procedures to reduce barriers to participation in the program.

Infant Toddler Mental Health Summit (\$118,000) Promote Infant and toddler mental health by hosting a summit of Partners (Maternal & Infant Home Visiting, Child Care, Child Protection Services, 0-5 Initiative, Head Start) to determine shared policies and initiatives to identify and address the social emotional needs of infants and toddlers and young children.

Target Setting for Federal Fiscal Years 2020 - 2025

Guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs regarding baselines and targets:

Baselines: States are permitted to revise baseline data and, when doing so, are required to provide an explanation for the revision. OSEP expects that baseline data would be revised when there is a change in methodology or data source for indicator that impacts comparability of the data.

Targets: States are required to set targets that show improvement over the baseline data for FFY 2020-2025 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report. If, based on prior year's performance, a State decides to establish FFY 2020-2025 targets that are lower than the targets that were established from FFY 2016-2019, OSEP encourages the State to provide information regarding this decision in its narrative. Generally, targets are not approvable if they do not show improvement over baseline; however, there have been specific instances where OSEP has allowed States to set targets that do not reflect improvement over baseline.

Performance Indicator 3: Child Outcomes *The percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved:*

- *Social and Emotional Skills*
- *Acquisition and Use of Knowledge and Skills*
- *Use of Appropriate Behaviors to Meet Needs.*

The methodology for collecting Child Outcomes data has been an improvement strategy since the inception of the State-wide Systemic Improvement Plan leading to the development and implementation of a specific measurement tool (MEISR – Measure of Engagement, Independence, and Social Relationships), training modules, fidelity measurement tool, and regional monitoring and evaluation of the results. The presentation noted the revised measurement methodology and the pandemic's impact on measuring child outcomes with validity and reliability and the impact of both upon the results year over year.

Performance Indicator 5: Family Involvement *The percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family;*

- *Know their rights*
- *Effectively communicate their child's needs*
- *Help their children develop and learn.*

The methodology for collecting family involvement data is also an improvement strategy captured in the State-wide Systemic Improvement Plan. The gradual move away from paper surveys and requiring regional agencies to collate the data received began in 2016 – 2017. The next step in the improvement process is to move to an online application which will be managed by the University of Montana Rural Institute in July 2022 which will include data missing currently: representativeness and responsiveness.

- ✓ Each member of the FSSAC will receive a survey asking the member to identify what he/she considers to be the best means to identify performance targets for the years FFY 2020 – FFY 2025. This survey will be shared the week of December 13 with expected completion by December 20. The survey will also be shared with two other stakeholder groups: the Part C Leadership Team and the Division’s Leadership.

Parking Lot

- By-Laws
- Chair Requirements
- Acronym Dictionary

Public Comment

No public comment.

Next Meeting

December 14, 2021, via TEAMS from 9:00 – 11:30: will include review of Montana’s Annual Performance Report and the State-wide Systemic Improvement Plan.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30.