New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Steering Committee
Public Meeting between NOEEN and OPSB ECE Working Group

Agenda for Children
8300 Earhart Blvd. Ste. 201
New Orleans, LA 70118
October 30, 2018
10:00 a.m.

Committee Members in Attendance: Amanda Aiken, Thelma French, Kristi Givens, Kate Mehok, Joy Mitchell, Dr. Keith Liederman, Maria Blanco,

Committee Members Absent: Carole Elliott, Rhonda Taylor, Joyce Ridgeway, Kunjan Narechania

Community Members in Attendance: Alvin David, Sonjia Joseph, Sean Perkins, Tony Recasner, Jen Roberts, Pamela Steeg, Ben Kleban, Raynell Washington, Don LeDuff, L'Tanya Randolph, Erin Corbett

I. Call to Order

a. At 10:03 am, Jen Roberts called the meeting to order.

II. Presentation by OPSB

a. OPSB Senior Chief and External Affairs Officer Amanda Aiken gave an overview of the Orleans Parish School Board's efforts to create an Early Childhood Education Working Group in June 2018. Aiken elaborated on the recommendations of the group and asked OPSB Board Member Ben Kleban to discuss the proposed recommendations and potential Resolution issued by Kleban for the November 2018 OPSB Meeting.
b. OPSB Board Member Ben Kleban further described the recommendations of the OPSB ECE Working Group, including the identification of new public funding streams to support early childhood education in Orleans Parish (e.g. preemptive tax on rec marijuana prior to it being legalized, millage, soda tax, amusement tax restoration, online gaming/sports betting.) He provided information regarding the rationale regarding his potential Resolution to be presented including a request of $1.5M to be used to support nonrecurring costs as a "pilot" endeavor to demonstrate OPSB support of the field and to leverage a more ambitious effort down the line in public support of ECE. He stated that at this time, it was unclear whether this would be passed.

III. Discussion of the Group

a. Questions were asked regarding the rationale for nonrecurring vs. recurring costs and the use of $1.5M. It was clarified by Kate Mehok and Amanda Aiken that recurring costs would be prohibited uses of the fund balance.
b. Questions were asked regarding what the $1.5M could support. Kleban stated that it had not yet been determined but that the Lead Agency, as the potential recipient, could

make that determination. Representatives from early learning centers described potential augmentations to building facilities, equipment, curriculum, etc. but noted that most of their costs are recurring.

c. Kleban explained that his intent behind the Resolution was to help augment quality, not increase quantity of seats. It was designed to be complementary with the City Council City Seats request, which directly funds 'seats'. This fund might enable those who did not have capacity to apply for those seats become eligible to do so by building out their facilities, materials, etc.
d. Early Learning Center Providers Kristi Givens and Joy Mitchell detailed that the highest performing centers rarely get additional support as they are already "high quality" and stated that this fund should also be available to high performing centers for their own continued improvement.
e. Dr. Recasner requested details on the action plan should the Resolution not be fully supported by members of the OPSB or other individuals with concerns. Kleban stated that the four commitments made by OPSB in the working group would still remain priorities of his – the $1.5M investment is intended to be a first step, not the only step, towards improving access and quality for children ages 0-5. He stated that he believes a joint-effort from the City Council, OPSB, and the Mayor's Office would yield the greatest long-term support. Kate Mehok clarified that some school leaders are supportive of early childhood but disagree with the use of the fund balance to support the efforts.
f. Thelma French stated that the move by the local school board to explore fund development and local public funds puts NOEEN (Lead Agency) in a strong position to help augment and lead State efforts, including the Governor's agenda and the State Department of Education (such as the PDG application).
g. Kleban stated that this effort should be thought of as a pilot, which would potentially leverage additional funds, public will, and garner greater support with success. He stated that the Mayoral and City Council administration members share the view. He also stated that a potential millage or exploration of public funds should also include them as partners, as some are already exploring a potential child/youth millage.
h. Jen Roberts explained that she abstained from the vote on this matter in the ECE working group resolution because she felt it was a direct conflict of interest –the Lead Agency would potentially be expanded with these funds and NOEEN currently serves as the Lead Agency for Orleans Parish. She also stated that the NOEEN Steering Committee should be clear that supporting this effort directly expands the functions, oversight, and accountability of the Lead Agency leadership. Steering Committee members, and the NOEEN Board, should feel comfortable with the potential for increased accountability before signing on to any initiative. Mehok stated that a further review of who should be the Lead Agency might be required given the increased responsibility.
i. Kleban requested additional clarification regarding the roles and responsibilities of the NOEEN Steering Committee and the NOEEN Board. Roberts explained that the NOEEN Steering Committee is directly responsible for the oversight and approval of functions

related to the Lead Agency contract; the State contracts with the the NOEEN Steering Committee as the public governing body for early childhood for Orleans Parish. Roberts staffs the Steering Committee because NOEEN is the Lead Agency. The NOEEN Board is the oversight body for the nonprofit organization named NOEEN which is the intermediary for early childhood in Orleans Parish. The Lead Agency contract with the Department of Education is one contract or project that NOEEN manages. Roberts reports to the NOEEN Board of Directors.

j. It was proposed that a continued conversation regarding governance of who 'owns' early childhood education should continue. Jen stated that the Orleans Parish / NOEEN Lead Agency Pilot 2.0 application that she submitted to the DOE (and is currently under review) was explicit in its design to include this conversation on governance and to determine how the Lead Agency should be managed going forward. Regardless of the funding outcome, NOEEN's work in this area will begin in January 2019.

k. Keith Leiderman requested information on next steps. Kleban stated that he would like to pass the resolution to enhance the pilot and get the school board "into the game". He requested support of the Resolution and mentioned that the work will continue in this area as it is a priority of his and the administration. He stated that he planned to bring together elected officials over the course of the next months to explore funding streams and test public will. He committed to working closely with the NOEEN Steering Committee and Board as they explore next steps.

No action was taken. NOEEN Steering Committee Chairman Keith Leiderman thanked everyone for coming. The meeting was adjourned at 11:17 am.