New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Steering Committee
8300 Earhart Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70118
Meeting Minutes for March 17th, 2021

Committee Members in Attendance: Keith Liederman, Kristi Givens, Joy Mitchell, Thomas Lambert, Jen Roberts, Maria Blanco, Carole Elliot, Kate Mehok, Rhonda Taylor, Emily Wolff

Committee Members Absent: Thelma French, Joyce Ridgeway

Community Members in Attendance: Aimee Grainer, Angelique Thomas, Lindsay Weixler, Natalie Reich, Kenneth Francis

I. **CALL TO ORDER**
   a. At 11:36 AM Keith Liederman called the meeting to order.

II. **READY START NETWORK UPDATE**
   a. Jen Roberts from Agenda for Children provided general Ready Start Network updates.
      i. The City Seats budget for next school year was verbally confirmed this week.
         1. If all goes as planned, the City Seats program will be serving at least 200 children next year.
         2. We will find out in April about how many PDG requests there are, which could lead to substantial growth.
      ii. AFC is working with the state on CLSD funding. They will be reaching out to partners about what kind of curriculum and training needs they have in order to provide appropriate funding, if applicable.
      iii. AFC's early childhood vaccine coordination has been a smooth process. They have multiple partnerships, including ones with Children's Hospital and DePaul.
      iv. Ready Louisiana has established their early childhood agenda.
      v. NOEEN is in the process of adding a parent involvement piece to grant funding requests in order to increase family engagement.
         1. The Safe, Secure, Loved (SSL) Pilot is launching soon and looking for representatives from the community to participate.

III. **COORDINATED FUNDING**
   a. City Seats Allocation Update
      i. As of March 15, 99% of City Seats are full.
      ii. Waitlists have steadily grown, but are tracking behind typical demand.
      iii. While some fluctuation is expected for the rest of the year, enrollment has stabilized since December.
   b. LA4/NSECD Allocation Update

i. As of March 15, 83% seats in school-based PK4 programs are filled citywide.
ii. Enrollment has stayed comparatively static in PK4 programs.
iii. Update on 2021-2022 Allocations:
1. LDOE has affirmed we will not be penalized by low enrollment this year.
2. LDOE has promised to avoid partial allocations if at all possible.
3. Unless budgets grow, it is unlikely our LA4 or NSECD allocations will grow.
4. 2021-2022 allocations will be finalized in April.

c. Citywide Update
i. 86% of all publicly-funded seats are filled as of March 15, the same average enrollment as in January 2021.
ii. It is unlikely that we will significantly close the gap in enrollment before the end of the school year.
iii. The Committee discussed waitlists and the reasoning behind the higher waitlist numbers for programs that are not 100% full.

IV. COORDINATED OBSERVATIONS & SUPPORT

a. Spring 2021 CLASS Update
i. BESE permitted classes with sufficiently high Fall scores to waive their internal Spring observation.
1. 386 classrooms were eligible for the waiver. This leaves 188 classrooms to observe for Spring 2021.
2. 33% of Spring observations are complete to date; we anticipate reaching 100% by April 21.
ii. Due to lower observation numbers, NOEEN has been able to implement a staggered schedule, provide temporary relief compensation for contracted observers, and implement extra PD for the Spring.
iii. We are expecting an accountability and performance profile update at the April BESE meeting.

V. DISCUSSION

a. American Rescue Plan Act
i. The benefits for child care providers in the act include:
1. Employee retention credit extended to Dec 2021 (refundable up to $5k / employee)
2. Paid Leave credits extended through Sep 2021 (up to $12K / employee)
3. $7 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program (application closed Mar 31)

4. $15 billion for EIDL (eligible if located in low-income area, experience >30% revenue loss)
5. $773 million for LA child care; $297 million in CCDBG and $475 million for "child care stabilization fund"
6. $1 billion for Head Start; $250 million for special education programs for infants and toddlers
7. Increases total child care funding by $130 mil / year; waives state match funds for 2021-2022

b. Advocacy, policy and the role of the Steering Committee
   i. Keith Leiderman proposed to establish a NOEEN Advocacy Sub-Committee that meets between Steering Committee meetings to discuss in detail public policy, advocacy, procedural and process issues, concerns, and solutions.
   ii. The Advocacy Sub-Committee would be open to community members.
   iii. Keith Liederman also proposed piloting the Advocacy Subcommittee for six months or so before formally adding it to the bylaws.
   iv. Emily Wolff and Kate Mehok discussed creating policy positions and statements for NOEEN to use in both the short and longer term.

VI. COORDINATED ENROLLMENT AND INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

a. Thomas Lambert from NOLA-PS provided an update on the Enrollment Sub-Committees.
   i. The Steering Committee is rebooting sub-committees from before the start of the pandemic. For the 2020-2021 school year, sub-committees will meet in May and June.
   ii. The categories to focus on, as identified by the sub-committees, are:
      1. Communication/public information
      2. Adjust or develop new policy
      3. Enhance technology
      4. Equip partners to help.
   iii. Thomas shared a variety of different ideas gathered from the sub-committee meetings for research and next steps associated with both LA4/NSECD and Head Starts.

b. Upcoming News & Next Steps
   i. The next and final regularly scheduled Steering Committee meeting will take place on May 19, 2021.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 1:11 PM.

<u>Action Items</u>

- **Action Item No. 1**: On the motion of Jen Roberts, seconded by Kristi Givens, the Committee approved the adoption of the agenda for the March 17 Steering Committee meeting.
- **Action Item No. 2:** On the motion of Jen Roberts, seconded by Kate Mehok, the Committee approved the minutes from the January Steering Committee meeting.