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## **New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Steering Committee Meeting**

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Agenda for Children  
8300 Earhart Blvd. Ste. 201  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
April 5, 2016  
11:30am

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**Committee Members in Attendance:** Dr. Anthony Recasner, Kristi Givens, Sonjia Joseph, Kate Mehok, Joyce Ridgeway

**Committee Members in Absence:** Maria Blanco, Superintendent Patrick Dobard (Holly Reid attended as non-voting proxy), Carole Elliot, Thelma French (Adrian Todd attended as non-voting proxy), Superintendent Henderson Lewis (Sean Perkins attended as non-voting proxy), Keith Liederman

**At 11:39 am, the meeting was called to order by Dr. Recasner.**

**I. NOEEN Coordinated Enrollment**

**a. Update: *Main Round Data and Preparations for Round 2 (Kristen Illarmo, Recovery School District)***

- **Overview:** Kristen Illarmo provided an overview of OneApp's Main Round. Over 6,000 children applied for a seat; of these, 66% verified their eligibility. At the end of the Main Round, families were given an extension for verification. As a result, verification rates went from 58% to 66% during the extension. Applicants for PK4 were most likely to get verified, while infants were least likely to get verified. Ms. Illarmo expressed her appreciation for Head Start partners, who successfully assigned EPC scores for 100% of verified applicants.
- **Round Tow:** The Coordinated Enrollment Working Group met, and EnrollNOLA made some changes to the Early Childhood Catalog based upon the group's recommendations, which included adding more space, reducing text, revising Head Start eligibility and revising the CCAP section to reflect the fact that CCAP centers are no longer in the match.
- **CCAP:** The Louisiana Department of Education has provided NOEEN with more information about which families have been determined eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), which is a first step toward potentially including CCAP in the match in the future. However, the Rate and Availability form poses a significant challenge to the match. All families applying for CCAP must complete the form, which requires them

to choose a center and have that center's director affirm that he/she is willing and able to offer a spot to the applicant's children. Because it requires families to choose a center before they're even found eligible for Child Care Assistance, it means that a family would be guaranteed a seat at a particular center before they were even entered into the match, which undermines the logic of the matching process. The CCAP Allocated Seat program has been delayed by the Department, and will now launch in the 2017-2018 school year.

- **Main Round:** Provisional matches will be made on Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> and final matches will be made on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. Once a match has been finalized, parents log onto the parent portal and see the match, even before they receive an email from EnrollNOLA.
- **Tuition-Based PK4 policy:** Several schools now offer tuition-based PK4 seats in an effort to increase socio-economic diversity and serve more students. It became clear to schools, their authorizers and the EnrollNOLA team that there is a need for clear policy to ensure that tuition rates are fair and appropriate, that all programs are following the same rules, and that increases in tuition-based seats do not result in corresponding decreases in the number of seats available to low-income children. Agenda for Children, EnrollNOLA, RSD, and OPSB staff developed a proposed addendum to the NOOEN Coordinated Enrollment Framework that details a policy for PK4 tuition seats that are offered by LA 4 providers. The proposed policy states that:
  1. Tuition-based seats must be approved through the coordinated funding process.
  2. Tuition rates will be capped at \$4,580 unless an operator makes a formal request to charge more. When requesting approval the operator must provide justification to EnrollNOLA for the tuition rate.
  3. Per LDE guidelines, the tuition amount for any child cannot exceed the average per child amount the school spends for LA 4 eligible children in the class. Classroom space and utilities must be excluded. EnrollNOLA will work with each respective authorizer to review the request.
  4. All in-school LA4 students will receive guarantee to Kindergarten.
  5. PK4 tuition students will receive guarantee if at least 50% of the K class is LA4 students, filled by OneApp or a combination thereof.

- b. **Clarifying Questions from Steering Committee Members:**
  - **If a school has 40 LA4 seats and 40 tuition-based seats and 80 kindergarten seats, all of their PK students could continue on to kindergarten under the tuition-based seat policy?** Yes.
  - **Could early learning centers be included as “tuition-based seats” in OneApp?** It’s too late to change how they are described in the 2016 catalog.
- c. **Public Comments**
  - **Do centers participating in LA4 have a cap on how many children they can serve?** No. Tuition-based seats are the primary reason for centers’ existence, and only two early learning centers have LA4 classrooms right now.
  - **An audience member expressed concerns about what might happen if different schools have different tuition rates.** In the Main Round, prices were noted with dollar signs, but these were eliminated for the Round Two catalog because it was not clear how much tuition would be charged at each program. Additionally, different programs have different hours and calendars, making it difficult to accurately and clearly communicate costs to families. The catalog advises parents to contact programs for details.
  - **An audience member noted that most schools want to norm the price (so that tuition would be the same, regardless of which program a family chose.) A steering committee member followed up by asking if any operators are charging more than the LA4 base rate, and if so, how many of them are doing so.** At this point, that information is not yet available.

**II. Presentation: *Citywide Early Childhood Education Funding* (Dana Henry, STAND for Children)**

- a. **Overview:** Stand for Children has convened a group of early childhood stakeholders to discuss early childhood education funding. As part of this process, the group identified characteristics of high-quality ECE programs, the cost of implementing these characteristics, and ways to pay for improved quality and access. It found that the baseline cost of a high-quality seat is approximately \$11,593. The total cost of improving quality and expanding access for all at-risk four year-olds is approximately \$46 million, excluding capital costs and wrap-around services. Ideally, this would be managed through a public-private partnership.
- b. **Potential Funding Models:** The group looked at models from other states. Some

states have simply included prekindergarten in their K-12 funding formula, while others have used tobacco settlement funds or lottery proceeds. The group explored the potential of state sin taxes, as well as local taxes (soda, income, property or sales). No one local tax would be sufficient to fully fund this initiative. The group also explored social impact bonds, which have been used in Utah to fund early childhood education.

- c. **Public Comments:**
    - It's important to include three year-olds in this discussion because there is a huge unmet need for care for three year-olds.
    - We can't forget that many families with incomes above 185% of the federal poverty line struggle to find and pay for high-quality early childhood education.
- III. **Update: *NOEEN CLASS Summit (Dr. Bridget Rey and Elizabeth Kief, Agenda for Children)***
- a. **Overview:** Dr. Recasner noted that in the previous meeting, NOEEN discussed holding a CLASS Summit to think about what it will take to build the supports teachers and leaders need to succeed on the CLASS tool. Elizabeth Kief provided an overview of CLASS scores at the local, state and national level, noting that state and local data did not reflect the scores that will be replaced due to discrepancies with the third party scores. Instructional Support will likely be somewhat lower at the state and local levels once the replacement scores are factored in.
  - b. **CLASS Summit Planning:** Dr. Rey provided an overview of the summit planning committee, which includes 9 members representing the sector's various funding streams and settings. Agenda staff have been in frequent communication with Teachstone (the developers of the CLASS tool) to inform the network's approach.
- IV. **Update: *CDA (Child Development Associate) Credential Information (JoAnn Clarey, Agenda for Children)***
- a. **Overview:** Agenda for Children has received a start-up grant (Believe and Prepare) from the Louisiana Department of Education and provisional BESE approval to launch a Child Development Associate (CDA) program that was designed to go beyond the traditional CDA approach. In addition to providing group classes, all participants will receive on-site coaching, participate in communities of practice and engage in cross-site visits. Participants wishing to go on to pursue an associate's or bachelor's degree will be able to get 3 hours of college credit for their CDA coursework.

**b. Steering Committee Member Questions and Comments:**

- **Director buy-in will be critical.**
- **How can teachers apply?** Agenda for Children will announce it and solicit applications through our web site and newsletter.
- **Who will staff this?** Agenda for Children is hiring two full-time staff to serve as coach/instructors.
- **Where will classes be held?** Most classes will be held at Agenda for Children, though Professional Learning Communities will be held elsewhere.
- **Are you planning to expand the number of participants?** That is part of the long-term plan, but this will be a pilot year.
- **Are you offering the curriculum to other CDA providers?** The state is intentionally having all five “Believe and Prepare” grantees work together to ensure that best practices are shared statewide.
- **Is this equivalent to an AA degree?** It is not, but it is “stackable,” meaning that the course will count as three hours towards an Associate’s degree.

**V. Update: *BUILD Conference* (Elizabeth Kief, Agenda for Children)**

- a. Elizabeth Kief provided more information about the July BUILD conference in New Orleans, which focuses on QRIS efforts across the country.

**VI. Update & Action Item: *NOEEN Legislative Agenda* (Holly Reid, Recovery School District)**

- a. **Current Legislation:** Holly Reid provided an overview of bills that were identified as potentially having an impact on the early childhood sector. As she reviewed them, she asked committee members to consider 1) if they are relevant to our work and 2) if NOEEN should take a stand on them.
- b. **Developing a Legislative Agenda:** Holly Reid provided an overview of a proposed process to develop the NOEEN legislative agenda in the future, which includes:
  - Consult with local advocacy groups such as Stand For Children and Louisiana Policy Institute to be informed of actions on particular bills of interest
  - Send update emails (action alerts) on ECE-related bills to NOEEN partners as bills are heard in committee, etc.
  - Provide information, talking points to Steering Committee members and NOEEN partners about NOEEN-impact of proposed bills
  - Authorize NOEEN Steering Committee members to speak on behalf of NOEEN according to approved positions

### **Action Item(s)**

- **Action Item No. 1:** On the motion of Sonjia Joseph and seconded by Kate Mehok, the Committee adopted the Agenda.
- **Action Item No. 2:** On the motion of Kate Mehok and seconded by Sonjia Joseph, the Committee approved and adopted the addendum to 2015-16 NOEEN Coordinated Enrollment Framework regarding PK4 tuition at schools participating in the LA 4 program.
- **Action Item No. 3:** On the motion of Joyce Ridgeway and seconded by Kristi Givens, the Committee approved NOEEN support of HB 576 and HB 753.
- **Action Item No. 4:** On the motion of Kristi Givens and seconded by Joyce Ridgeway, the Committee approved NOEEN opposition to reductions in early childhood education funding in HB1.
- **Action Item No. 5:** On the motion of Sonjia Joseph and seconded by Kristi Givens, the Committee agreed to adopt the proposed process to create a NOEEN legislative agenda in the future.
- **Action Item No. 6:** On the motion of Kristi Givens and seconded by Joyce Ridgeway, the Committee adjourned at 1:30 pm.