New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Steering Committee
8300 Earhart Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70118
Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2022

Committee Members in Attendance: Kristi Givens, Joy Mitchell, Kate Mehok, Jen Roberts (proxy Chair for Keith Liederman), Maria Blanco, Jonika Julian (proxy for Thelma French), Jack Shaevits (Proxy for Emily Wolff), Derrick Toups, Rebecca Latham

Committee Members Absent: Keith Liederman, Rhonda Taylor, Thelma French, Emily Wolff

Community Members in Attendance: Emily Madeira, Caitlin Boley, Natalie Reich, Teresa Falgoust, Mark Thomas, Kiara Oyola, Ariel Test, Anna Williamson

I. **CALL TO ORDER**
   a. At 11:32 pm Jen Roberts called the meeting to order.

II. **COORDINATED FUNDING**
   a. Jen Roberts and Emily Madeira from Agenda for Children (AFC) and NOEEN provided general updates on B-3 and City Seats programs.
      i. AFC recently welcomed a new Director of B-3 Access Initiatives, Mark Thomas.
      ii. ChildPlus software is being implemented to help turn around data much quicker and address lapses in attendance for the City Seats program.
      iii. NOEEN is working with Tulane School of Social Work to offer attendance counseling to City Seats families
         1. Language barriers and illness are the most frequently noted barriers to achieving 85% of attendance.
         2. Families who received counseling services still wanted to maintain their scholarship, despite attendance challenges.
            a. Attendance counseling resulted in one request for a mental health provider and three additional families in need of bus passes.
      iv. The 2022-2023 City Seats and B-3 Planning Retreat is taking place over Zoom this month.
         1. MOU updates include further defining parameters around attendance monitoring and protocol for dropping students.
         2. The access initiatives team at NOEEN and AFC collected feedback from providers around scheduling PD.
            a. Next year, providers will schedule PD directly with wraparound support teams.
      v. Additional B-3 funds are expected to be distributed in July.

1. NOEEN is planning an additional CFR to place these seats.
2. The proposed July B-3 CFR priorities are:
    a. Current providers who lost seats FY 21-22 due to unforeseen circumstances beyond the sites' control;
    b. New providers with high quality and high demand, and;
    c. Current providers with high quality and high demand.

III. READY START NETWORK UPDATE

a. Jen Roberts and Derrick Toups from ACF provided Ready Start Network (RSN) updates.

i. Derrick Toups, the new Director of Network Strategy, will be leading the RSN and NOEEN Steering Committee work moving forward.
    1. As the primary liaison for the Steering Committee, he will be reaching out to members ahead of the next school year.

ii. The RSN re-application was submitted on May 12.
    1. The decision should be announced on June 14, after the BESE meeting.
    2. The RSN grant award is $100K annually, from July 2022 to June 2024.
    3. NOEEN's RSN work will focus on updating the Strategic Plan to account for the significant shift from the millage.

iii. The Community Supply Building and Access Expansion (CSBAE) Grant application was submitted on April 13.
    1. The decision should be announced on June 14, after the BESE meeting.
    2. The CSBAE grant award is $500K from July 2022 to March 2023.
    3. The application included an overview of the current state of access to early care and education that used data collected directly from local providers.

iv. The Ready Start Transform Grant application was submitted on December 12, 2021 and awarded on March 4, 2022.
    1. NOEEN requested $2 million and was awarded $1.75 from March 2022 to April 2023.
        a. The funds are currently stalled at the state level, but are expected to be distributed before July 1
    2. The grant priorities are to build the capacity of the early care and education system in Orleans and to expand, attract and retain early care providers.

a. The Ready Start Transform Grant has already funded 40 early childhood seats.

b. Jen Roberts provided an overview of the Early Childhood Education Millage and Strategy.
    i. At the May 2022 meeting, the Committee discussed activities to date, next steps, areas of review and activity, and began to plan.
    ii. NOEEN recently launched its workforce task force.
        1. The group includes community providers, AFC staff, and other stakeholders from around the city.
            a. They will focus on how to recruit, train and retain a highly qualified ECE workforce.
        2. Derrick Toups is leading this work from the AFC side. He provided an overview of the first workforce task force meeting
            a. The group defined workforce as early care and education educators and leaders who work with children ages birth through five on a consistent basis.
            b. The task force will focus on three buckets of work.
                i. Preparing educators and leaders with the necessary experiences before entering/while working in a classroom setting, and creating pathways for individuals to access these opportunities and identifying and addressing barriers to access.
                ii. Recruiting and retaining early childhood educators, with the goal to grow the sector by 150-400 educators.
                    1. One in two teachers leave the classroom every year.
                iii. Offering comprehensive compensation, defined as hourly pay and benefits.
            c. Maria Blanco asked about the LDE's plan to articulate the CDA and make it a pathway to an Associate's or Bachelor's degree.
                i. Derrick Toups responded that the Board of Regents now has a full time early childhood staffer who is actively working on that. There are a few pathways already in action across Louisiana, and AFC is working to duplicate it in Orleans soon.

3. Facility investments, including the launching of the facilities task force, will begin soon.
    a. By the end of the year at least four providers will get a down payment to refurbish or build out facilities.
4. NOEEN has new data reports coming out, including information about how geography affects families' ECE choices.
5. Teresa provided some insight to the data from the preliminary work.
    a. Children often end up at programs that are closer to their homes than where the parents' preferred site is located.
    b. There is a large concentration of family child care providers in New Orleans East
        i. There has been a lot of growth in low income families, but not necessarily in enrollment.
6. The current City Seats program still has one more year, so NOEEN is focusing on preparing for next school year while also looking at the future of the millage.

c. Caitlin Boley, Emily Madeira, and Jen Roberts provided an overview of areas of review and activity for the Committee.
    1. NOEEN is still accepting feedback related to the Steering Committee Bylaws, but will not finalize changes until NOEEN's governance structure is finalized.
    2. The Committee discussed gaps that currently exist related to membership and what working groups should exist to address expansion.
        a. Jen Roberts suggested a City Council staffer join the Committee.
        b. The Committee went over the current subcommittees and working groups.
        c. Jen Roberts recommended bringing on additional support and/or expertise for students with exceptionalities.
            i. Kristi Givens suggested having a working group around children in foster care.
            ii. Maria Blanco suggested having a special populations working group.
        d. Derrick suggested a PR or media working group.

i. With the millage, the City Seats program will be thrust into publicity.

3. An additional $40M in legislative funding is going to the Child Care Assistance program, making the program a lot closer to the cost of care.
4. An additional $40M is going toward the LA Early Childhood Fund.
    a. The funding went from $1.08M to $41.08M
5. AFC is putting together a team to oversee and audit the contracts associated with the millage.

IV. COORDINATED ENROLLMENT AND INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

a. Rebecca Latham from NOLAPS provided enrollment updates.

i. Ongoing activities include EC enrollment handbook review/reivisions, application redesign, enrollment system updates, and the coordinated enrollment campaign.
    1. NOLAPS is partnering with Avela and Attain to redesign the enrollment application.
    2. NOLAPS is working with their communications team to ensure family awareness of application and timeline is increased.

ii. Language is not currently being tracked in the enrollment system, but NOLAPS is working to identify families as non-English speaking in the redesign.
    1. A new position at AFC, the Community Liaison and Referral Specialist, will be bilingual in order to support Spanish speaking families with navigating the enrollment system.

V. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. The 2022-2023 Steering Committee Calendar was presented to the Committee and a formal vote was taken to adopt it.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 12:33 pm.

<u>Action Items</u>

- **Action Item No. 1**: On the motion of Kristi Givens, seconded by Kate Mehok, the Committee approved the adoption of the June 2022 meeting.
- **Action Item No. 2:** On the motion of Joy Mitchell, seconded by Kristi Givens, the Committee approved the minutes from the May 2022 meeting.
- **Action Item No. 3:** On the motion of Derrick Toups, seconded by Joy Mitchell, the Committee approved the adoption of the 2022-2023 meeting calendar.
- **Action Item No. 4:** On the motion of Maria Blanco, seconded by Rebecca Latham, the Committee approved the adjournment of the June 2022 meeting.