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MINUTES

Name of Organization: Initial Training and On-Going Professional Development for Early Intervention Providers Subcommittee formerly called the ICC Developmental Specialist Certification/Endorsement

Date of Meeting: November 14, 2016

Place of Meeting: Telephone Conference

I. Call to Order, Roll Call and Introductions

Dr. Ann Bingham called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m.

Members Present: Nicole Atwell, Ann Bingham, Robin Kincaid, Sandra LaPalm, Marnie Lancz, Joyce Larsen, Lori Ann Molina, Yvonne Moore, Fatima Taylor, Jenna Weglarz-Ward, Megan Wickland.

Members Absent: Christine Riggi, Diane Ross, Johnette Oman.

IDEA Part C Office Present: Margot Chappel, Shari Fyfe, Edie King, Ellen Marquez.

Public: Jennifer Buchter.

II. Public Comment

No public comment was given.

III. Approval of the Minutes from the September 1, 2016 Meeting

Dr. Bingham asked for any comments or corrections to the minutes.

- Dr. Jenna Weglarz-Ward stated she was at this meeting but she was not shown in the roll call.
- Joyce Larsen stated her name was spelled incorrectly.

Margot Chappel questioned, under Item V, the statement made by Brenda Bledsoe that the Part C Coordinator would be in conflict with Part C Policies in writing a letter of

exception towards endorsement or certification. She stated it was her understanding in Part C Policies the Part C Coordinator could approve another certification or make an exception. Ms. King stated Ms. Chappel's statement is correct and read the section of the Part C Policy relating to this. Shari Fyfe remarked there was a letter of exception written for a person seven years ago, however, that person has made no progress towards their endorsement. Therefore, it is believed the letter cannot go on for that long. Due to the confusion regarding the statement in the minutes, Dr. Bingham stated the committee should have additional information and asked for clarification from the recording for this part to be reflected in the minutes. Ms. Chappel stated she would work with Ellen Marquez on the clarifying the minutes.

Robin Kincaid made a motion to accept these minutes. As there was no second, the motion did not pass. Dr. Bingham stated in hearing no second, the approval of the September 1, 2016 minutes were not approved and this agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

IV. Review of the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Personnel Standards for Early Intervention Providers

Dr. Bingham stated the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Personnel Standards was included in the meeting packet. The DEC is the professional organization for those providing any special education services for infants, toddlers and their families. She requested the committee look at this handout to see what the professional organization has determined as the requirements for initial licensure. There are advanced standards for those who are going into supervisory positions within early intervention or early childhood special education which go beyond these requirements. It is important to understand these requirements moving forward to know what changes, if any, should be made. Dr. Bingham stated at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) her syllabi reflect these standards. When she creates assignments, the syllabi specifically reference which knowledge levels and skills students will have opportunities to practice. Ms. Kincaid inquired if Dr. Bingham addresses all ten standards and the content of those standards in her classes. Dr. Bingham replied they learn the knowledge aspect and practice the skill aspect of the standards. The assignments may be a field work placement or something specific as part of a course. Dr. Jenna Weglarz-Ward stated the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) aligns the courses with the standards. However, students may not get the standards in one course, but repeatedly throughout all the courses in the syllabi. Dr. Bingham added by the time a student is ready to apply for licensure they have had the exposure to all of the knowledge standards and opportunities to use the skills learned. Ms. Larsen stated if it is the intent for these positions, which we are addressing, to meet the standards of the profession, then it is important these standards be represented in the training and curricula used to prepare students for the professional positions.

Ms. Chappel stated she is not hearing any issue with the course work after meeting with program managers in Elko, but with the logistics around licensure especially with the taking of the Praxis tests. Ms. Chappel stated her understanding of the licensure through the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), is that the endorsement is a secondary certification to a regular teacher certification. Dr. Bingham explained the endorsement

is only one of three stand alone licenses that she is aware of that does not require a person to already have a teaching license. Ms. King added that the Praxis Tests are a requirement of NDE to receive the license and was only recently added as a requirement for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education. Shari Fyfe added Constitutional Law and Educational Leadership are required courses for a Master's degree so the test is not required if those classes have been taken. Dr. Bingham stated it is her hope the standards will be used as a type of "umbrella" over personnel who are working in early intervention so they will view their work as a profession and be aware of these standards as guidance from their professional organization.

V. Review and Discuss Draft Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Alternative Certification for Early Intervention Services Developmental Specialist Series and the Initial Option for Certification of Developmental Specialist to Determine What Recommendation Will Be Made to the ICC

Ms. King referred to the handout "Development Specialist Draft" in the meeting packet. She explained Brenda Bledsoe created this document when this subcommittee was reconvened to look at the option for certification as comparable course of study to the endorsement. The subcommittee was tasked with finding a course of study and/or experience in early childhood developmental delay comparable to what could be received through the University system in order to obtain licensure/endorsement. Ms. King stated the first option in the draft could be implemented because it would address those Developmental Specialists (DS) who are having a problem passing the Praxis Tests even though they have taken all of their University level classes and passed them. Therefore, it is proposed if a DS has passed with a "C" or higher all of the required University level classes and is dedicated to a career in early intervention, but does not want a license or does not plan to teach in the school district, they can get a certification approved by the IDEA Part C Office. With this option, the important thing is to support these DSs with on-going mentoring, coaching and Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

Ms. Kincaid asked if there was an estimate on how much time it would take for the IDEA Part C Office staff to do this process and whether an infrastructure was in place. Ms. King stated it is part of State Systems Improvement Plan (SSIP) and there is limited information, but that does not mean there cannot be a plan. Ms. Kincaid asked if there are other states who handle licensure monitoring for DSs this way. Ms. King replied most states have larger Part C offices to be able to be responsible for these responsibilities. Also, there are states with an infrastructure where standards of practice courses are required but not necessarily through a University. Ms. Chappel stated she is not concerned about the handling of the issuing of the certification through the IDEA Part C Office.

Ms. Kincaid inquired how many people are not in compliance and technically not able to progress. Ms. King stated a personnel list was presented to the ICC at a previous meeting, but it has not been updated since being prepared. She added both state and community partners have had program personnel out of compliance for receiving their endorsement but she did not know what percentage that is compared to personnel who have theirs.

Dr. Bingham cautioned the subcommittee about considering the processes used in other states without first determining their standing with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Arizona was given to the subcommittee as an example and their OSEP determination for last year is “needs assistance.” She recommended the subcommittee not hasten into a process that might put Nevada further away from a “meets the requirements” determination which was finally achieved this past year by following a state that is in a lesser determination.

Ms. King stated there are competencies and learning modules from national organizations, such as the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTAC), Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC), DEC and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), which can be researched to make Nevada’s competencies/learning modules without reinventing the wheel. Fatima Taylor inquired if Nevada’s system is adequate as far as the curriculum, the collaboration with the hands on and mentoring, efforts in improving the relationship with NDE and their possible funding assistance in helping staff pay for classes. Ms. King replied during a meeting between Dr. Catherine Lyons and Dr. Jeff Gelfer of UNLV and Dina Durish from NDE about those issues they were basically told NDE could not help. Ms. Chappel stated at the last ICC meeting members, Sherry Bingham and Michael Walker of NDE, said they would speak with the new person in the NDE Licensing Office. She indicated she would follow up with them.

Ms. Chappel asked about the status of options two and three. Ms. King stated the draft was sent out for feedback, but none was received. Dr. Bingham explained this is a ladder approach where option three is designated for a trainee position; option two would be for a DS I or II and option one would be for a DS III. She believes it is important to work from the top down as the people who are DS IIIs or higher are those who are looking at this as a profession. Ms. Taylor stated her concerns with the ladder approach based on her experience with filling DS positions and the volume of children entering the system. She explained in her program a DS trainee is actually a Public Service Intern (PSI) who is in school and in actuality is DS in training. Dr. Bingham stated not all programs have PSIs which can be a challenge and they are not taking on caseloads. She asked what a caseload looks like for the different levels in the state programs and the community providers. Ms. Taylor and Marnie Lancz described the length of training in each of their programs for their personnel to be successful. Dr. Bingham remarked this is important for the subcommittee to know and understand that the programs within the state system do not work the same and how can fidelity be ensured for training across the board. Ms. Fyfe stated with training people at NEIS, there is a huge difference between a DS I and a DS III. She indicated there should be a ladder between a DS I and a DS III, because a DS III should be able to handle such things as home visits, paperwork, the MDTs and all the awkward situations that come up. Dr. Bingham added this is an essential conversation and agrees we need to make sure people are working to become a DS III. She agrees with the idea that a DS III should not get caught up in supervision if their desire is direct services and to be out with families.

Dr. Bingham requested the subcommittee continue to collect data on the number of DSs who have not had an issue applying for the endorsement, those who have had problems with the application process, and those who have let their endorsement lapse. She also

recommended reporting back to the ICC on Option One in the draft only because there has been no discussion of the other two options.

Ms. Chappel stated that was a good idea and to send the “Development Specialist Draft” out to the ICC as a document in progress. Dr. Bingham agreed and she appreciated today’s discussion as this subcommittee moves forward in removing barriers in assisting personnel in receiving their endorsement, but still maintaining the high quality of educated personnel expected.

VI. Review and Discuss Needed Supports for Alternative Certification Including Mentoring, Coaching, Continuing Education Units (CEU) and Competencies to Determine What Recommendation Will Be Made to the ICC

Ms. Kincaid stated at a previous meeting there was a discussion that programs, including Nevada PEP, have extensive orientation processes. The subcommittee needs to make sure, if any changes are made, staff are not put in a position of having to do so much mentoring or training that they are not able to fulfill their function. She added as a parent of a child with a disability, the concern is always out there, from parents and advocates, the system does not bring in quality personnel, has personnel in the field who feel overwhelmed and do not have support, or do not have the basic foundation they need. Therefore, the subcommittee should want to see the personnel system benefit from a better infrastructure of orientation, mentoring and follow along.

Dr. Weglarz-Ward stated research supports anytime education standards are reduced, especially for teachers, it decreases the amount of teachers who stay in the field. When looking to recruit and train teachers, this not only cuts off the pipeline for teachers entering the field, but it may be something that increases turn over. Dr. Weglarz-Ward stated there is no reciprocity across states with an online certificate program. There is no guarantee for personnel that it can be used in any other state. Dr. Bingham added the online certificate could be something offered by the IDEA Part C Office for someone to be able to provide DS special instruction services here in Nevada. She restated the conversation is focused on the “Development Specialist Draft” in regards to whether the subcommittee is going to continue to support courses through the University or to make it more of a progression for a provider to move from PSI up into a DS I, II and III without the NDE licensure requirements.

Dr. Bingham stated the subcommittee is asking a lot from Ms. Chappel, as the new interim IDEA Part C Coordinator, in regards to making decisions to this draft and that not only do the state employees, but also the community partners need to have a level DS policy. Ms. Chappel corrected that she is not the interim coordinator but the acting coordinator. She explained she is not anticipating moving out of the position, but there will be no decision until the Legislative session is over and the DHHS director’s office moved the IDEA Part C Office under her supervision.

A discussion ensued over the progression from DS I through DS III and the length of time it should take to progress in accordance with the Minimum Qualifications (MQs).

Dr. Bingham suggested there should be a legally binding and notarized document on file for each person indicating they understand that by not obtaining their NDE licensure there would be no guarantee of being able to work outside of the Nevada system, which would protect the IDEA Part C Office. Dr. Bingham stated the feedback from the “Development Specialist Draft” needed to be received by December 16, 2016 to prepare for presentation to the ICC at their meeting in January. Ms. Fyfe stated she and Ms. Marquez would work on getting the information in the “Development Specialist Draft” matrix.

Ms. Kincaid brought up the process of CEUs for those who receive the certification. She would like to see the CEUs follow a certain process similar to what other professional organizations go through before issuing CEUs. Her other concern is with mentoring. She does not feel if one staff person is being mentored by another staff person, which is difficult to establish what they are learning through mentoring, that the issuance of one CEU is given just to fulfill the CEU requirements. Ms. Chappel asked if Ms. Kincaid agreed with CEUs being through the Nevada registry for courses taken. Ms. Kincaid stated she did not because she does not know the degree level of courses offered through the registry. Dr. Weglarz-Ward stated it might be beneficial to look at other states and how they approach CEUs as a professional development for their Early Intervention providers.

VII. Consider Agenda Items for the Next Meeting

- Clarification of the Minutes
- Stakeholders Feedback
- Data for DSs and certification/barriers and challenges
- Preliminary information from other states around what their certification looks like

VIII. Schedule Future Meetings

Dr. Bingham recommended the next meeting should be after the January ICC meeting. She suggested February 23, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. as a tentative date and requested it be a meeting using GoToMeeting.

IX. Public Comment

Joyce Larsen stated she is retiring soon and it has been a pleasure working with everyone and wishes everyone all the best in the subcommittee’s future endeavors.

X. Adjournment

Dr. Bingham adjourned the meeting at 3:24 p.m.