

Florida Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers (FICCIT)
 Quarterly Meeting
 October 19, 2021

Draft Meeting Minutes

Member Name	Member Seat	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)	Absent
Kim Carr	Public/private provider of early intervention services			X
James Dunn	Member from the agency responsible for the State regulation of private health insurance			X
Dr. Judith Levin	Member from personnel preparation program		X	
Rob Porcaro	Public/private provider of early intervention services		X	
Misty Porter	Parent of child with disability age 12 or younger		X	
Kathleen Vergara	Public/private provider of early intervention services		X	
Dr. Ilene Wilkins	Public/private provider of early intervention services		X	
Member Name	Member Seat	Present (In Person)	Present (Via Phone)	Absent
Vacant	Parent of child with disability age 12 or younger	--	--	--
Vacant	Parent of child with disability age 6 or younger	--	--	--
Vacant	Parent of child with disability age 12 or younger	--	--	--
Vacant	Public/private provider of early intervention services	--	--	--
Vacant	Public/private provider of early intervention services	--	--	--
Vacant	Member from the agency responsible for children's mental health	--	--	--
Vacant	Member of the state education agency responsible for preschool services to children with disabilities	--	--	--

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Vacant	Member from a Head Start Program	--	--	--
Vacant	Member from the State Legislature	--	--	--
Vacant	Member from the state agency responsible for childcare	--	--	--
Vacant	Member from the state child welfare agency responsible for foster care	--	--	--
Vacant	Member from the state agency involved in the provision of, or payment for, early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families	--	--	--
Vacant	Member from the agency responsible for the State Medicaid and CHIP program	--	--	--
Vacant	Office of Coordination of Education of Homeless Children & Youth	--	--	--
Guests	Affiliation	Present		
		(In Person)	(Via Phone)	
Maryanne Marchese	Early Steps State Office		X	
Dusty Edwards	Early Steps State Office		X	
Robert French	Early Steps State Office		X	
Lily Wells	Early Steps State Office		X	
Marcy Hajdukiewicz	Early Steps State Office		X	
Jasmine Wallace	Early Steps State Office		X	
Melissa K Nelms	Early Steps State Office		X	
Angela Marcus	Early Steps State Office		X	
Jessica Meyer	Early Steps State Office		X	
Dr. Robert Karch	Early Steps State Office		X	
Angham Habib	Early Steps State Office		X	

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Luc Toussaint	Early Steps State Office		X
Marisol Rose	Early Steps State Office		X
Mary Hilton	Early Steps State Office		X
Robin Masterson	Early Steps State Office		X
John Lee	Northeastern Early Steps		X
April Leopold	Northeastern Early Steps		X
Laurie Colon	Central Florida Early Steps		X
Jessica Dunn	Central Florida Early Steps		X
Kathy Riley	Central Florida Early Steps		X
Olabisi Baruwa-Castro	Southernmost Coast Early Steps		X
Ellen Schrot	Gold Coast Early Steps		X
Mary K Carroll	Gold Coast Early Steps		X
Althea Puzio	Space Coast Early Steps		X
Shelli Buckley	Space Coast Early Steps		X
Nicki Phillips-Wright	Space Coast Early Steps		X
Mary Cancel	Space Coast Early Steps		X
Kim Barger	Gulf Central Early Steps		X
Juliana Melara	Big Bend Early Steps		X
Susan Loftis	Big Bend Early Steps		X
Sean Seabrook	Big Bend Early Steps		X
Arleen Chilton	Big Bend Early Steps		X
Tameka Footman	Big Bend Early Steps		X
Trina Puddefoot	Southwest & Gulf Central Early Steps		X
Tina Cordell	Southwest & Gulf Central Early Steps		X
Anna Marie Pedraza	Southwest & Gulf Central Early Steps		X
Nelsy Crowell	Southwest & Gulf Central Early Steps		X

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Maria Cardigan	Southwest & Gulf Central Early Steps		X
Karol Verdone	Southwest & Gulf Central Early Steps		X
Justine Hicks	Department of Children and Families		X
Darci Banister	North Dade Early Steps		X
Marissa Barrera	Treasure Coast Early Steps		X
Natalie Enzo	Treasure Coast Early Steps		X
Rose Lumm	Central Florida Early Steps		X
Paula Burns	Southwest & Gulf Central Early Steps		X
Doris Tellado-Gonzalez	North Central Early Steps		X
Annalise Campisi	Bay Area Early Steps		X

Call to Order – *Dr. Ilene Wilkins, Chair*

Jessica Meyer called the meeting to order and completed Council member roll call. The presence of a quorum was established with all the members in attendance via phone. The Council voted unanimously to approve the July 28, 2021, Meeting Minutes with no abstentions, or negative votes.

Motion: Approval of the July 28, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro

Seconded Motion: Dr. Judith Levin

Discussion:

State Office Update – *Dusty Edwards, Bureau Chief of Early Steps and Newborn Screening, Florida Department of Health*

Dusty Edwards provided the council with a state office update. The Department submitted the request to continue funding for SSIP. In addition, a request was submitted for the authority to spend the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. The Annual Report is in the routing process and will be submitted to the Governor and FICCIT.

ARP Funding Update and Stakeholder Input – *Jessica O. Meyer, MSW, Early Steps Program, Florida Department of Health*

Jessica Meyer provided the council with an update regarding ARP funding. A call for vendors recently went out and the Early Steps State Office (ESSO) will begin working soon with the selected vendor to update the website and materials.



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Next year, there may be a project to focus on updating the New Star Training. ESSO is working to establish a contract with a Technical Assistance (TA) Center to develop Child Outcome Summary (COS) Implementation training. A project manager was hired to lead this project, in addition to handling several of the projects under the ARP. A full program evaluation was another project identified. ESSO will look for an external entity to evaluate the state office structure, federal requirements, state requirements, and contract requirements with the intent to provide recommendations on improving monitoring and contracts. Some funding is allocated for the new data system and provider recruitment and retention. Stakeholder input has been requested for recommendations to spend the approximately two million dollars that has not been allocated for other projects. The funds are time limited and need to be obligated by September 2023. Dr. Ilene Wilkins recommended looking at curriculum, materials, testing kits, and devices for all the therapists. Jessica Meyer also mentioned other considered items including hiring additional contract managers and quality improvement coordinators to be TA resources for each LES. Dr. Ilene Wilkins recommended looking at purchasing laptops and provider recruitment bonuses. Jessica Meyer responded that funds have been budgeted to provide the LESs with assessments. Dr. Ilene Wilkins encouraged the opportunity for any funding to go back to those that are directly impacting the children. Jessica Meyer shared that the funding is also being used to update the ESSO Orientation and Service Coordinator Training.

OSEP Monitoring Update – *Jessica O. Meyer, MSW, Early Steps Program, Florida Department of Health*

Jessica Meyer provided the council with an update regarding the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) monitoring. ESSO received the results from the 2019 on-site monitoring in January 2021. There were some findings that required a corrective action plan. Florida submitted the corrective action plan in April and is awaiting feedback. Jessica spoke to the OSEP project lead recently and they have reviewed it and a response is routing and anticipate getting it soon. Jessica Meyer mentioned that in recent discussions with the OSEP project lead have centered around Florida being in Needs Assistance for nine years and is at risk of being placed in Needs Intervention. ESSO is working to implement restructuring to help influence better compliance rates. ESSO is actively looking at ways to better serve the local offices and provide improved communication and technical assistance. All Local Early Steps (LES) Programs are encouraged to look at improvement of individual processes. The determination overall score is largely driven by child outcomes scores. It is anticipated that the use of the COS process would increase outcome scores. It is important that the providers fully understand the COS process for measurement.

Indicator Target Setting – *Jessica O. Meyer, MSW, Early Steps Program, Florida Department of Health*

Jessica Meyer provided the council with recommended Indicator Targets to be submitted in the State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report. (See Attached)

Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome – *April Leopold, Administrator Northeastern Early Steps, UF College of Medicine, Jacksonville*

April Leopold provided the council with an update on a project related to Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). Duval County has the highest rate of cases reported to CMS related to children diagnosed with NAS. Therefore, Northeastern Early Steps was asked to look at how the kids are being referred to Early Steps, what does the data system show for the number of kids with a diagnosis, and is that reflected in the data? Northeastern believes that NAS diagnoses are underreported for several reasons. There is currently one code in the data system and the hospital is using four additional

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codes. The NAS diagnosis was not being recorded in the discharge summaries and the children were being referred as At-Risk for low birth weight. As a result, Northeastern has asked for the additional codes to be added to the data system and met with hospital staff to streamline referrals processes and educate them on correct codes to be used. They have been working on this for three and half months and now have seen a twenty percent increase in the number of children referred with NAS. The key is the communication and education with LESs and Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) to hopefully increase the number of referrals across the state as well.

Public Comment –

There was no public comment.

Meeting Adjourned –

Motion: Adjourn the meeting.

Motion Made By: Rob Porcaro

Seconded Motion: Kathleen Vergara

Discussion: None

Motion Passed