

**Joint Board Meeting of District 97, District 200
and the Village Board
with the Early Childhood Collaboration
Elementary School District 97 Headquarters
206 Madison Street
Oak Park IL**

Call to Order

President Weissglass called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. A roll call indicated the following members were present: Fred Arkin, Jennifer Cassell, Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Steve Gevinson, Sara Dixon Spivy, and Jeff Weissglass. Also in attendance from OPRFHS was Interim Superintendent, Dr. Joylynn Pruitt.

Others present were:

Village of Oak Park - Village President Anan Abu-Taleb, and Trustees Colette Lueck and Adam Salzman, and Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

School District #97 - President Jim Gates, Members Graham Brisben, Rupa Datta, Jim O'Connor, Bob Spatz, Holly Spurlock and Superintendent Dr. Carol Kelly

Collaboration Board - Amy McCormick, Chair; Gordon Hellwig, Treasurer; Debbie McCann, Chair of Measurement and Evaluation Committee, and Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, Executive Director

Others: Bob Goerge and George Sanders of Chapin Hall

Review of Agenda

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent with the Special Focus presentation to come before Item D.

**Governing Board
Report**

District 97 Memo on Distribution of Funds

Mr. Spatz reported that the new D08 CFO, Dr. Alicia Evans had prepared this memo and discussed the distribution of funds and reimbursement.

Chair Lueck discussed a new term, "Fiscal Sponsor" now being used by some nonprofits instead of "Fiscal Agent". Mr. Spatz will investigate whether this alternative would be appropriate here.

**Future Meeting
Dates and Planned
Topics for
Discussion**

Mr. Spatz reported that a proposed partnership with the Erickson Institute couldn't be done this school year but noted that D97 has offered a commitment for next year if selected and would use some resources from the reserve fund. He reported that not all slots were filled in this year's initiative.

He also reported that the data model is being presented at the Illinois Data

Research and Evaluation Committee of the Illinois Early Council and to other school boards, including several thousand attendees at the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The Collaboration may need help to respond to invitations to present and the IGA Board can help. He will attend a world forum in New Zealand and will also present there.

**Administrative
Report**

Mr. Spatz reported that the new D08 CFO, Dr. Alicia Evans had prepared a memo about the distribution of funds and reimbursement and discussed this memo.

Chair Lueck discussed a new term, “Fiscal Sponsor” now being used by some nonprofits instead of “Fiscal Agent”. Mr. Spatz will investigate whether this alternative would be appropriate here.

**Collaboration
Annual
Report**

Chair McCormack reported on the work of the Collaboration, noting committees and volunteers involved. The early childhood comprehensive system is beginning to take shape.

First, developmental screening has been expanded from 20 to 30 sites, including 16 childcare facilities, 11 family childcare facilities, and three medical practices, with a 77% completion rate for the screening process. She reviewed the details of the report and percentage increases in each area.

Second, home visiting transitioned to Easter Seals, which now handles ongoing services. Parenthesis retained 56 families they had served and efforts to arrange for continued sharing of information have not been successful. Easter Seals began anew and now has a caseload of more than 20 families. Easter Seals is based at 120 Madison Street. They made investments in the building redesigning the space to accommodate the new program. Three agencies now handle home visits, Easter Seals, Parenthesis, and Hephzibah. Ms. McCormack share that the Collaboration had worked on developing a strategic plan and 444 parents had completed a survey and focus groups and key stakeholder interviews were also held to help inform the plan.

Third, the annual February Symposium provides professional development with 365 early childhood professionals participating in 2016. In addition training on creative learnings, creative arts, science and math have been offered.

The Collaboration is working on overall growth and visibility through a newsletter, Facebook site, and ads on Facebook. The first fundraiser, “Karaoke for Kids”, was a great success.

Finance Report

Treasurer Hellwig reviewed the financial reports which focus on programs, delivery and measures. He thanked the local governments for the investment they have made in the program. The Collaboration has returned \$428,000

which was not spent during the prior fiscal year to the fiscal agent. This was due to a change in vendors for the parenting support programs as well as other cost saving through the organization; the Collaboration expects to use funds next year as the new vendor expands services.

The audited financial statement resulted in a clean audit with very strong results. Assets during the prior fiscal year are strong, cash is available for operations. Ninety percent of expenses go to programs and only 10% is used for administration and marketing. He also noted the year to date internal balance sheet of income and expenses for July through October. At this point in the fiscal year income is ahead of expenses but the Symposium and Easter Seals will be sources of increased spending in the rest of the year.

Measuring Our Progress

Director Newberry Schwartz introduced Collaboration Board members and staff and guest speakers from Chapin Hall.

Intergovernmental Agreement Board Chair Colette Lueck introduced the first topic of the meeting, the Special Focus report on Measuring our Progress.

Executive Director Carolyn Newberry Schwartz reviewed the report goals: the importance of the Collaboration, the work being done, who is served by the Collaboration, what is being measured, how progress is being monitored and measured, and the current status of the project.

She reviewed key issues of development in early childhood, developmental delays, impacts on at-risk children and the return on investment for early childhood programs. Initial concerns included disparities in achievement between student groups in our schools and fragmentation of and uneven access to services for children who need them.

The Collaboration works to promote the development of the whole child for better outcomes from birth to kindergarten engaging everyone involved in early childhood across all services, program types, and governmental agencies to create a comprehensive and integrated system. Schematics of the system were presented.

Work is guided by twelve committees comprised of 195 people (some on multiple committees). Over 60 active partners include the Village and Public School districts, township, park district and library, community colleges and universities, health care providers, developmental service providers and early intervention, child care centers, preschools and home child care providers.

A rich demographic profile is being developed to determine how many people are part of the service area, how many infants and children under five, the

number of families or households, racial and ethnic demographics, poverty rate and the intersection of race/ethnicity and poverty. Mr. Goerge reviewed what is known about the demographic portrait of Oak Park and River Forest over the first two years (2013 and 2014).

Outcomes being measured include child outcomes (arrive at kindergarten safe and ready to learn), service delivery outcomes (parents and children receive early childhood care, education, parenting information and services needed), and system outcomes (development of high quality coordinated early childhood system aligns with K-12 districts and state programs and strategies).

Ms. McCann reviewed three samples of the outcome measures and progress scorecard of the 11 outcome measures included in the IGA, which include progress on the measure and on the underlying data collection for the measure. All 11 topics were included in the reports included with the agenda.

Mr. Goerge discussed some of the challenges of data integration including matching of data for a particular child across different data systems without a common linkage (such as student ID, SSN or date of birth). He discussed the “messiness” of data and challenges of tracking over time.

The work of the Collaboration is unique nationally, including coordinated efforts of public and nonprofit agencies with state administrative data. Integrated longitudinal data is essential to define and address gaps in the provision of early childhood services. This collection of extensive data is now being compiled for families, children, services and service providers. The compilation of data and relevant data sources from birth to three, three to five, through the Early Childhood Workforce Survey and District 97 data sources are part of the project. The Collaboration works closely with providers of data to understand it, improve data quality and use the data to inform program delivery.

Ms. McCann reported that the database is built and generating measures on indicators with progress reports each fall. Results are sent to committees who identify progress goals for each indicator for program and data collections. Work begins to implement the plans by winter of each year.

Through a grant from the Grand Victoria Foundation, longitudinal research is being expanded to determine if plans services are meeting demand and if programs are having an effect on how children do in school. This model is being shared throughout the State.

Mr. Cofsky asked if the data has shown increased mobility in the Village

which the high school has seen. Director Newberry Schwartz said they have not yet gotten relevant data but will receive information soon.

Chair Lueck asked the group what this information tells them.

Director Newberry Schwartz explained that the Collaboration uses the measures to establish progress targets and plan action steps in order to create a continuous cycle of improvement.

Mr. Goerge noted the challenge of changes in disabilities and said that this should provide actionable data.

Mr. O'Connor noted his pride in the district's investment in this important work and the good data being compiled. He asked what unmet needs have been identified. What can be done better to expand services?

Director Newberry Schwartz explained that at this time the community has the spaces needed for Preschool for All (PFA) and Head Start. The broader funding challenge from other levels is the distinction between areas of concentrated poverty in other areas versus the dispersed poverty in Oak Park. The biggest unmet need is for full-day services, as D97 and Head Start are half-day programs. She noted that having all slots in one building is a barrier due to transportation issues.

Mr. Goerge noted that unlicensed care is the fallback for families who need full-day care. A state HHS award to Chapin Hall is being used to evaluate use of unlicensed care which tends to be of lower quality.

Mr. Spatz said that he will be presenting at a meeting on December 1 on the education of young children and noted that Oak Park is far ahead of other communities with the screening of 1500 children and hearing/vision screening for 1200-1300, an impressive accomplishment.

Ms. McCann discussed this issue. They had looked further into it and discovered that the application rules, which had automatically enrolled qualifying students, now required completion of paperwork, depressing participation. Director Newberry Schwartz and others discussed the issue with D97. Participation impacts Title 1 funding as well, and the good news is that the State has now returned to the automatic enrollment procedure.

Mr. Gates reiterated the need for policy makers to understand any areas where they could leverage additional support to the effort.

Director Newberry Schwartz reminded the group that the 11 outcome

measures that are incorporated in the contract, along with subcategories of these measures, are reported on at least annually. Three reports have been issued to date. The two most recent reports were included with the meeting materials.

Chair Lueck noted that with upcoming elections next spring the composition of the IGA Board will be changing and expressed a desire to educate candidates about the data, funding and operational aspects of the Collaboration, now a national model, and the degree of intergovernmental cooperation unique to this effort. She asked how this can effectively be communication to candidates and the community.

Mr. Salzman suggested that the Collaboration questionnaire used earlier had been helpful to him. Chair Lueck suggested the importance of getting similar information to all candidates. Mr. Weissglass noted that candidates are overwhelmed with information and it might be hard for them to absorb all of this while running for office. He suggested a coffee or open house. He also recommended that representatives from each Board to the IGA Board be from different election cycles to maximize continuity.

Manager Pavlicek suggested tapping the past members of the IGA now retired as a great resource to explain the origin and context of the Collaboration.

Collaboration founder Eric Gershenson spoke from the audience about the multiple issues being discussed but noted that incumbents can speak more loudly and clearly about these issues and have weight in these discussions. Mr. Gates noted that he has met with candidates and included the Collaboration in his discussions with them.

Issues, Concerns
And Topics for
Future Agendas

Ms. Felton asked where the Collaboration stands regarding data sharing with Parenthesis. Director Newberry Schwartz explained that this has not yet been resolved but now that Parenthesis has become part of the Chicago-based New Moms they are hopeful that this issue can be resolved. Her goal is also working on developing coordinated intake for home visiting to ensure that children are enrolled in the most appropriate program.

Mr. Brisben asked what the Collaboration needs from the governments at this point.

Director Newberry Schwartz asked that those present talk about the Collaboration with people they meet to raise the profile and recognition of the group in the community. She asked for help to locate at-risk infants and toddlers who could benefit from services and stressed the need to locate and identify them, ideally through a stronger referral system and community

organizing. Ms. McCann stressed the need for creative ways to find the children and to become known as a resource for the whole community.

Mr. Gates suggested that everyone inform new neighbors about the Collaboration. Mr. Brisben stressed messaging to the community. Director Newberry Schwartz suggested strengthening the presence in the schools.

Mr. Brisben mentioned the Oak Park River Forest High School Citizens' Council discussion of the achievement gap and equity issues and the need to direct resources to early education. The D97 referendum in the spring will include the "good news" story of the Collaboration and engage further support for it. Chair Lueck also urged great community awareness and asked all governments to get the word out.

Adjournment

At 9:07 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion to adjourn was approved.

Jeff Weissglass
President

Sara Dixon Spivy
Secretary