

New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Steering Committee
8300 Earhart Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70118
Meeting Minutes for June 5th, 2019

Committee Members in Attendance: Keith Liederman, Gabriela Fighetti, Kate Mehok, Maria Blanco (telephone), Joy Mitchell, Kristi Givens, Jen Roberts (ex-officio, proxy for Maria Blanco)

Committee Members Absent: Joyce Ridgeway, Carole Elliot, Rhonda Taylor, Thelma French, Kunjan Narechania, Carole Elliot

Community Members in Attendance: Melanie Richardson, Kristen Illarmo, Sean Perkins, Thomas Lambert, Lindsey Weixler, Jonika Julian (proxy for Thelma French)

I. Call to Order

- a. At 11:50 am, Keith Liederman called the meeting to order.

II. Coordinated Enrollment

- a. Kristen Illarmo provided an update of Early Childhood Coordinated Enrollment.
- b. There are currently a total of 1,052 seats open between all funding sources. Fewer programs are closer to being fully enrolled (with the exception of NSECD seats) when compared to last year. Also the overall number of open seats now is higher, albeit close, to the number of open seats at this same time last year.
- c. The potential reasons behind fewer applications being submitted during the Main Round are varied. The enrollment could be due to more stability in the region, but it could also mean fewer engaged families or verifications.
- d. OPSB is doing outreach via email and text to encourage families to complete their eligibility check and also to encourage them to check the Seat Availability report to select a seat if they have yet to do so.
- e. Registration reminders are being put into place for the first time this year, which means parents who have received placements will be sent texts and emails to encourage them to claim their seat and complete registration paperwork at the school they have been placed.
- f. OPSB is currently working on solutions to assist Head Start and EHS sites with the verification process during the month of July, due to these locations closing for professional development and staff vacations. The two proposed options that OPSB is considering are:
 - i. Calling or emailing parents/guardians to schedule appointments for when staff returns in August.
 - ii. Keeping 8 out of 16 verification sites open for July rather than closing all locations.

II. **Coordinated Funding**

- a. Sean from OPSB provided relevant updates on the coordinated funding request.
 - i. **LA4:** Main round allocations were made. Based on Main Round placements, there may be a need to reallocate seats, which will be brought to the committee at the next meeting if necessary. Due to timing, it may be necessary to reallocate seats over the summer related to OPSB's allotment. Should that be necessary, the Committee voted that the seats be awarded to Capdau (next on the list). Should Capdau not be able to accommodate/responsibly manage these seats, there will be an additional CFR all-day to determine an operator before returning them to the State.
 - ii. **NSECD:** Only five seats for this funding source remain to be allocated. Two seats are to be allocated to St. Rita's and three seats are to be allocated to St. Stephen. If additional seats need to be reallocated, they will be brought to the committee at the next meeting.

III. **NOEEN Network Updates**

- a. CLASS Observations were completed in totality for Spring 2019. The last day for providers to appeal their scores is July 1st.
- b. Making the Most of CLASSroom Interactions (MMCI) Training is in its second cohort. To date NOEEN has trained 199 teachers which equals over 4,300 hours of professional development in Orleans Parish. Cohort two of MMCI is currently on track to complete another 100 participants, adding another 2,400 hours of PD in the region. Lastly, NOEEN is set to run a 3rd cohort with local LEAs, Total Community Action and Kinglsey House in July which will potentially run with 114 participants and add another 2,736 hours of PD provided to local early childhood educators.
- c. City Seats Orientation was held on June 3rd where City Seats providers met to go over the program agreement and collaborated with the Lead Agency around methods of effective program implementation.
- d. Currently Agenda and NOEEN are working on a data project to track EC demand accurately. Currently demand isn't necessarily tracking in traditionally high demand areas. In an effort to uncover the reasons behind this, more data is being collected in an effort to inform future decisions.
- e. NOEEN officially launched the Early Childhood Opportunity Fund, or ECHO Fund, on May 14th. The program intends to help build the capacity of early care and education programs to address Orleans Parish's challenges in access to and quality of early childhood programming. The grant will run in 3 grant cycles, the first of which closed on June 4th. Grant amounts can vary from \$5,000 – \$25,000 and the lead agency expects to award 10 providers/EC nonprofits. There will be an internal review of data, to enrich decisions around allocations.

- f. NOEEN held their Summer Quarterly Convening on May 14th where providers received updates on CLASS Observations, Enrollment, and the Echo Fund.
- g. Ready Start Grant: NOEEN Focus Group
 - i. NOEEN’s strategic plan created over 2 years ago so focus groups were created in order to re-strategize the work of the lead agency in an effort to capitalize on the shifting landscape. The focus groups were scheduled with Steering Committee Members to gather input on NOEENs work to-date and the entity’s future role in the early childhood landscape. What was found is that many of the priorities listed in the Strategic Plan are still in alignment with the current work, but some recommendations have been deployed in an effort to further align NOEEN with the Strategic Plan.
 - ii. Participants in focus groups provided information around their vision for NOEEN’s ideal levels of engagement to create the ideal ECE landscape in the city in terms of ‘lead’, ‘support’, ‘monitor’. Findings were that NOEEN should lead coordination of local ECE leaders, raising awareness, and supporting providers. Steering Committee participants found that NOEEN should support investing in children and families, raising family awareness of resources/services, and support creation of effective and equitable policies. Finally NOEEN should monitor economic and employment opportunities, creating a neighborhood sense of belonging as well as workplace and land use policies.
 - iii. NOEEN, based off of focus group findings, will move to bring on further representation from other ECE stakeholders onto the Steering Committee. Specifically there will be another member added to include a representative of the City Seats funding source, as well as an increase in Type III center representation. Also, given low attendance, NOEEN and Steering Committee members will re-evaluate sitting committee members. Voting on this will take place in August.
 - iv. Focus groups also found a need for subcommittees to be formed, therefore there will be three, to be comprised both of Steering Committee members and non-members.
 - 1. Coordinated funding
 - 2. Coordinated enrollment
 - 3. Coordinated observation/quality
 - v. NOEEN is holding on moving on other focus group recommendations until additional representation is added to the Steering Committee.
 - vi. Final comments centered on policy as legislative session is coming to a close.

IV. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 1:16 pm.

Action Items

- **Action Item No. 1:** On the motion of Gaby Fighetti and seconded by Kristi Givens, the Committee approved the agenda for the meeting
- **Action Item No. 2:** On the motion of Gaby Fighetti and seconded by Kristi Givens, the Committee moved to accept the minutes from March 12, 2019 meeting of the NOEEN Steering Committee.
- **Action Item No. 3:** On the motion of Gaby Fighetti and seconded by Kate Mehok the Committee moved to approved the following: **if needed**, OPSB LA4 unallocated seats will be awarded in the following order: Pierre A Capdau Charter School (next on the list) followed by all-call to current LA4 operators for those needing additional seats. It also included a vote to allocate the remaining NSECD seats to St. Rita's and St. Stephens.
- **Action Item No. 4:** On the motion of Kate Mehok and seconded by Kristi Givens the Committee moved to approve the request to add Thomas Lambert as a committee member replacing Gaby Fighetti and to update bylaws to include a subcommittee structure.
- **Action Item No. 5:** On the motion of Joy Mitchel and seconded by Kristi Givens the Committee moved to approve the 2019-2020 Steering Committee meeting dates.