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## New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Steering Committee Meeting

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Agenda for Children  
8300 Earhart Blvd. Ste. 201  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
January 31, 2018  
11:30 am

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**Committee Members in Attendance:** Carole Elliott, Joy Mitchell, Mary Garton, Kate Mehok, Joyce Ridgeway, Kunjan Narechania, Keith Liederman, and Thelma French

**Committee Members in Absence:** Kristi Givens, Rhonda Butler, Maria Blanco (Raynell Washington attended as non-voting proxy)

At 11:46 am, the meeting was called to order by Dr. Liederman.

**I. NOEEN Strategic Plan Update**

- a. Search for NOEEN Executive Director:** The search for NOEEN Executive Director will resume after the Mardi Gras holidays. The search process will be re-opened with a national focus and widened to include candidates that have education experience, but not necessarily experience in early education experience.

**II. Coordinated Enrollment Update**

- a. Early Childhood Application Submissions:** In comparison to this time last school year, EnrollNOLA has received a higher number of applications, but a lower number of verifications. The lower number of verifications can be partially attributed to citywide closures during January's snow and ice storms. EnrollNOLA is working with the Education Research Alliance (ERA) to test out the effectiveness of personalized text messages to increase verification rates. For example, the texts provide families with information on which documents are needed for verification, and let them communicate directly with EnrollNOLA staff. EnrollNOLA expects the number of verifications to rise due to the impact of texting, Saturday verification events, and weekly emails sent to families that have applied, but need to complete verification. February 23<sup>rd</sup> is the application deadline, and families have until March 2<sup>nd</sup> to complete verification.
- b. Four Year Old Seats:** EnrollNOLA anticipates having more seats than eligible 4 year olds for the 2018-19 school year. Head Start programs are prioritizing 3 year old children and setting their match targets based on the number of 3 year-olds expected to continue in their programs.
- c. Coordinated Enrollment Plan Submission:** The coordinated enrollment plan is due to the LDE on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Supporting documents for the plan include the policy framework, copies of the 18-19 recruitment and informational materials, event details, description of the application, matching, registration, and details on parent demand. As

part of the coordinated enrollment plan, each network is expected to provide signatures from every program partner to confirm that they have been engaged in the planning process and approve of the plan. Programs had the opportunity to review the plan (and sign onto it) at the NOEEN Program Partner meeting, and program partner and steering committee members were invited to sign onto the plan during the Steering Committee meeting.

**d. Clarifying Questions and Comments from Steering Committee Members:**

- **Why are there applicants for seats outside of Orleans parish?** NSECD students can be from anywhere in Louisiana.
- **Are any Head Start sites having trouble filling?** Currently some programs still have seats open, while other programs have waitlists for Pre-K 3 seats.
- **Have we considered different dates for the Schools Expo? It is always around Mardi Gras, which is difficult for families and providers.** The Schools Expo is coordinated by the Urban League of New Orleans, but our understanding is that the date largely depends on the availability of the Superdome.

**III. Coordinated Funding Update**

**a. Early Childhood Seat Approval:** Last week, BESE approved LA4, NSECD, and PEG allocations. There have been some new seat allocations (of previously unallocated seats) since the last NOEEN Steering Committee meeting:

- 10 LA4 seats will be allocated to Bricolage.
- OPSB approved InspireNOLA as the turnaround operator for Eisenhower and FirstLine Schools as the turnaround operator for Cultural Arts Academy. Both operators have committed to retaining the LA4 seats for the 2018-19 school year.

These seats have been added to OneApp so parents can apply. These new seats have also been flagged on the EnrollNOLA website, and parents who applied before these seats were confirmed received an email informing them of their new options.

**b. Tuition-Based Seats:** Several schools operate tuition-based PK4 seats. Tuition-based seats are provided in classrooms that meet LA4 standards, and children served by LA4 are served in the same rooms as children whose families are charged tuition. By law, programs cannot charge more for these seats than the average cost of serving children in that classroom. NOEEN policy stipulates that programs must formally make a request through the Coordinated Funding Request process if they wish to charge more than \$4,580 annually in tuition (which is the per-pupil amount provided by LA4). Given several recent requests from schools, it has become clear that the policy could be strengthened by providing more guidance on what information programs need to provide with their waiver requests, which entity evaluates and approves waiver requests and how tuition seats are monitored on an ongoing basis. The Coordinated Funding Request sub-committee will meet to discuss the matter and return to the Steering Committee with recommendations at the March meeting.

- c. **Clarifying Questions and Comments from Steering Committee Members:**
  - **Are programs allowed to charge tuition? Does this go against LA4 regulations?** LDE's policy states that programs can charge families no more than the average per-pupil cost, excluding the costs for classroom space and utilities. Tuition and/or registration-type fees cannot be charged to families who qualify for LA4 and are awarded an LA4 seat.

#### IV. **Coordinated Observations and Supports**

- a. **Score Improvements:** From Spring 2017 to Fall 2017, NOEEN has had an increase in scores in every domain for both the Pre-k and Toddler CLASS tools. This improvement in scores can be attributed to our change in protocol. The Louisiana Department of Education implemented several changes to observers' protocol this year, some of which are likely to have a positive effect on CLASS scores. Additionally, NOEEN has fully aligned its protocol with the Picard Center (Third Party) observers' protocol.
- b. **Concordance between Picard (Third Party) and Local Scores:** If there is a large difference between local and third party scores, third party observers may return to that program to complete an additional observation to determine whether the classroom actually experienced a significant change in quality.
- c. **PEG Supplemental Funding Application and Plan:** NOEEN has received an opportunity from the LDE to apply for funds to support sites that are rated as either Approaching Proficient or Unsatisfactory in program improvement efforts. Networks could apply to use funds for curriculum implementation or to improve teacher-child interactions through the use of the MyTeachingPartner or MMCI, a group coaching methodology. The Network has applied to conduct MMCI trainings. Participating teachers will attend ten trainings and their program leaders will receive consultation sessions to foster program improvement. If NOEEN is selected for funding, centers will apply to participate in the program and participants will sign assurances to ensure their ongoing participation.
- d. **Clarifying Questions and Comments from Steering Committee Members:**
  - **How are we helping teachers coming into the workforce? Are they learning about Teaching Strategies GOLD and CLASS?** As lead agency for NOEEN, Agenda for Children serves on the advisory committees for Delgado and SUNO's CDA programs.
  - **Do programs have reliability concerns?** Yes, NOEEN staff have received questions and concerns about the difference in scores between the local and third party observations. It is important that programs to trust that local scores are accurate; it is anticipated that aligning local observer protocol with the Third Party protocol will also result in greater alignment between local and third party scores.

#### V. **Other**

- a. **City Early Childhood Funding Update:** NOEEN is working with officials from the City of New Orleans to develop a program structure that will ensure that seats funded by the

city will be high-quality and meet families' needs. Dr. Recasner has been working with private foundations to obtain matching commitments to maximize the number of high-quality seats. The Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) requires NOEEN to work in partnership with the City Health Department.

- b. Early Childhood Events:** The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children hosted the first early education week in Louisiana, with events in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Metairie. The Institute invited business leaders and legislators to attend and make the case for an investment in early learning in order to better support our existing and future workforce.
- c. State Budget:** The Governor released the executive budget. Unless additional revenue is approved in the legislative session, many programs that serve children and families (primarily education and health) are slated to receive significant cuts.
- d. Evaluation Center at Mahalia Jackson:** As part of Child Search, an evaluation center for children will be launched at Mahalia Jackson elementary this summer. It is expected to open formally in July.
- e. Super Tax Day:** In partnership with United Way and Entergy, TCA will host Super Tax day at Xavier University. Families can walk in or make appointments. Regions Bank will also be present to assist individuals in opening bank accounts.
- f. Clarifying Questions and Comments from Steering Committee Members:**
  - **Do we have concerns about launching the city-funded early childhood seats in the fall?** It is expected that a process and CEA will be established before the new mayor transitions into office in May.
  - **Is the CEA between NOEEN and the City of New Orleans dependent upon on obtaining the funding match from private foundations?** While, ideally, private funding would be in place prior to the CEA, the CEA could be signed before additional funding is made available, provided that sufficient per-pupil funding is provided.
  - **Is the city funding committed to just seats, or it could it be used for professional development or certifications?** \$600,000 is earmarked for the provision of seats and \$150,000 is provided for administrative costs (which may include some quality improvement services and/or services for families).
  - **How many seats is the city asking for and is it only a one-year commitment?** The initial proposed CEA developed by the city called for 100 seats to be provided at a cost of \$6,000 per seat. Funding will need to be allocated every year, unless a dedicated revenue source is identified.

### Action Items

- **Action Item No. 1:** On the motion of Kate Mehok and seconded by Joyce Ridgeway, the Committee adopted the Agenda.
- **Action Item No. 2:** On the motion of Joy Mitchell and seconded by Kate Mehok, the Committee

adopted the minutes from the November 28, 2017 Steering Committee Meeting.

- **Action Item No. 3:** On the motion of Kate Mehok and seconded by Carole Elliott, the Committee approved the 2018-19 Coordinated Enrollment Plan.