

New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Steering Committee Meeting

Agenda for Children
8300 Earhart Blvd. Ste. 201
New Orleans, LA 70118
September 27, 2016
11:30am

Committee Members in Attendance: Dr. Anthony Recasner, Thelma French, Kate Mehok, Superintendent Patrick Dobard, Sonjia Joseph, Mary Garton, Maria Blanco, Kristi Givens

Committee Members in Absence: Carole Elliott, Dr. Keith Liederman (Yolanda Motley attended as non-voting proxy), and Joyce Ridgeway

At 11:38 am the meeting was called to order by Dr. Recasner.

I. Coordinated Funding Request (CFR) Presentation

A. Overview: This is NOEEN's second year organizing the coordinated funding request as required by BESE Bulletin 140. The goal is to ensure that the limited number of publicly-funded early childhood seats allocated to Orleans Parish go to programs that will meet families' needs, are high quality, and are in high demand. LA4, NSECD, and Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG) seats are all included in the CFR process. Child Care Assistance, Early Head Start and Head Start seats are not included in this process

- **Key Differences in the 2016-17 CFR Process:**

- i. Application:** The application itself has been shortened and the letter of intent portion of the process has been eliminated.
- ii. Who participates:** All programs wishing to receive LA4, NSECD and PEG seats must participate in the process, even if they are only seeking to renew existing seats. Last year, only programs seeking to increase seats or participate in this funding for the first time had to apply.
- iii. Timeline:** Because the Lead Agency must submit the recommendations to LDE earlier (by December 1st for the 17-18 school year), the local process had to begin earlier than it did last year.
- iv. Demand data:** Because so many early childhood programs participated in OneApp for 2016-2017, NOEEN now has robust data on parent demand, which will be used in calculating each applicant's score. Programs that do not have EnrollNOLA parent demand data because they have not participated in coordinated enrollment will receive a site visit. These programs will earn points based on quality measures in place of the parent demand data.

v. **Scoring:** Each application will be scored by an evaluation committee according to 1) program quality (star rating, scholarship cohort index score or school performance score), 2) demand data (or site visit data for programs lacking demand data) and 3) ability to meet community needs (i.e. transportation, meeting the needs of children with special needs and children who are English Language Learners and before-and after-care).

- **Allocated CCAP:** Allocated CCAP is not in the process this year because the launch of the Allocated CCAP program has been deferred by the LDOE for another year.

B. Clarifying Questions and Comments from Steering Committee Members:

- **What has been the pace of filling the additional four year old seats for this school year?** Last month, we had a gain of 100 Pre-K 4 seats being filled. They are still open seats, so it's entirely possible that some seats will not fill at all.
- **Are there PEG seats at schools?** There was a partnership at John Hoffman College Prep, but they did not fill all of their seats. Some of the seats were transferred to Lawrence D. Crocker.
- **Can PEG be offered at school sites?** It's possible that we could offer PEG at schools, but the grant was designed so that seats are offered in early learning centers.
- **Is there any possibility of diverting resources to find four year olds? Or holding more outreach events?** We suspect that the verification process was a major obstacle for some families, as many parents completed the application (meaning that they knew about the process and their options), but did not complete the verification process. There are only three Family Resource Centers where parents can go for verification, which is hard for parents that lack transportation or that can't get to a resource center during business hours. We have held weekend verification events and are planning more outreach this year.
- **Is mobile enrollment or door to door a possibility?** Given the cost of door-to-door outreach and the realities of a limited budget, NOEEN is more focused on getting the word out at events where families and children already are. NOEEN is also exploring opportunities to partner with pediatricians and clinics to get the word out about the application.
- **Do we have data on how the seats were dispersed throughout the city?** EnrollNOLA can report enrollment data by neighborhood and zip code.
- **If the Network doesn't receive an application from a program that has seats this year, do we take that to mean they do not want seats for next year?** The network will follow up with any currently funded program that

does not submit an application to ensure that they understand that they need to submit an application in order to continue receiving funding.

II. **CLASS Observation Update**

a. **Overview:** Recently the Picard Center, which provides “third party” evaluations to ensure the accuracy of local observations, released their protocol for CLASS observations. Their protocol diverges from Teachstone’s protocol (and therefore NOEEN protocol) because they will not be observing during “pullout” periods or specials. Given the fact that this could result in discrepancies between local and third party scores, Agenda for Children has been in communication with the Louisiana Department of Education to determine how to best address this. The LDOE reports that Lead Agencies can continue to follow the Teachstone protocol which allows observation during the aforementioned times. Agenda for Children and LDOE will have a conference call each month to compare our network observations and the third party observations. In instances in which the local scores and third party scores differ by more than one point, and the local observation included a “pullout” period, the local observer will not be penalized for not meeting the reliability standards set by LDOE.

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

- **What was the rationale in the protocol change?** There were concerns from schools about enrichment teachers who don’t know CLASS, but were with students for part of the day.
- **Are they open to changing their protocol?** The protocol is set for the school year.

III. **Practice Performance Profile Release**

a. **Overview:** Later this fall, the LDOE will release practice performance profiles for programs and Lead Agencies. The LDOE has to release the profiles to be accordance with the law, but they will not be heavily publicized. For Orleans, there were 3 centers with an unsatisfactory rating, one of which has already closed. Another plans to close. Orleans Parish did not have any programs receive an excellent rating; there were only 50 programs rated excellent statewide.

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

- **Are we at a point where we can compare this year’s scores to last year’s scores so we can provide support to programs?** There is no comparison data yet.
- **Do any of the indicators on the practice performance profile say that children are ready for kindergarten?** There isn’t an indicator that specifically answers that question.
- **Do parents know what all of these indicators mean?** No, it is likely that many parents are not well-versed in indicators of quality. In the past, many parents did not fully understand the quality star rating system for early learning centers. With our strategic planning process, it may become a

priority for the Network to have a campaign to educate families about quality and school readiness.

- **Is there any movement to use another measure in addition to CLASS for the performance profile rating?** This has been brought up before in Early Childhood Advisory Board meetings. It's possible, though limited funding could pose a problem for adding other measures of quality.

IV. **Coordinated Enrollment Presentation**

a. **Revision Overview:** EnrollNOLA and Agenda for Children coordinated a working group to receive feedback about this year's coordinated enrollment process and to recommend changes. The proposed changes are as follows:

- All Head Start placements will be described as "provisional" due to the poverty guidelines not being released until January.
- Round 2 for the early childhood process will be eliminated; after Round One, EnrollNOLA will fill seats from waitlists as they become available.
- Reduce the number of program options from 20 to 8.
- Ask Head Start grantees to develop a unified approach to verification that ensures different types of documents are being considered for eligibility and all cases are addressed in the same manner.
- Reduce waitlist offer choices to an applicant's top choices and the number of choices will be based on last year's data.
- Advertise verification days and times to make sure staff members are not inundated with families needing verification at times when they need to fulfill other duties.
- Allow Head Start staff to put families directly on waitlists instead of having families make a trip from the Head Start center to a Family Resource Center to get placed on a waitlist.

b. **Website Overhaul:** Beginning in November, EnrollNOLA.org will have some changes. Parents will be able to determine initial eligibility and filter programs based on choices such as neighborhood and cost. Also, families can view information for all programs, not just those participating in OneApp.

c. **Paper Application:** EnrollNOLA has begun the gradual phase out of paper catalogs to control costs. A smaller amount of catalogs will be printed this school year, which will only be available at the Family Resource Centers.

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

- **How many people got their ninth choice in this process?** It depends on the programs that the parents listed, but it is possible that some families would be matched to a 9th choice or higher if they listed high demand programs that only had a few openings. However, EnrollNOLA did get push back from parents about waitlists because most families do not want to accept offers from programs that were low on their list.

The EnrollNola team and the working group would like to reduce the number of waitlists that a child can be placed on as a result.

Action Item(s)

- **Action Item No. 1:** On the motion of Thelma French, and seconded by Superintendent Dobard, the Committee adopted the Agenda
- **Action Item No. 2:** On the motion of Kate Mehok, and seconded by Sonjia Joseph, the Committee adopted the minutes from the August 23, 2016 Steering Committee Meeting
- **Action Item No. 3:** The Steering Committee approved the deferment of adding Ben Kleban to the NOEEN Steering Committee for next meeting.
- **Action Item No. 4:** On the motion of Thelma French, and seconded by Patrick Dobard, the Committee approved the 2016-17 NOEEN priorities
- **Action Item No. 5:** On the motion of Maria Blanco, and seconded by Kristi Givens, the Committee approved the 2016-17 Coordinated Funding Request Process
- **Action Item No. 6:** On the motion of Superintendent Dobard, and seconded by Thelma French, the Committee approved the Coordinated Enrollment process changes.
- **Action Item No. 7:** On the motion of Sonjia Joseph, and seconded by Kate Mehok, the Committee adjourned at 1:30 pm.