

**Arkansas Early Childhood Commission**  
**January 18, 2011**  
**10:00 am**  
**Minutes**

*Members Present:* Dr. Bob West, Jeff Maneth, Missy Duke, Evelyn Bass, Ann Patterson, Dr. Rachel Bowman, Barbara Gilkey, Jody Veit-Edrington, Debbie Malone, Suellen Ward, Eleanor Coleman, Kim Qualls, and Shirley Pulliam.

*Members Absent:* Janice Dancer, Nickie Hammontree, Martha McAnally, Debbie Mays, Gene Gregory, Dr. Chadwick Rogers, Amy Denton, and Marilyn Chambers.

**I. Call to Order/Reading of Mission Statement**

The January 2011 meeting of the AECC was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by Barbara Gilkey.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Due to the absence of a quorum, it was decided that an electronic vote would be taken via telephone.

**III. Old Business**

**Follow-up on AR Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems**

Barbara Gilkey offered a brief review from the October 2010 meeting in which the Commission agreed to work closely with AECCS to further align our goals. This is being done because of the goals of the Commission and the work that is/has been done by AECCS is closely related.

David Griffin encouraged site visits for all Commissioners to get a better feel for program facilities.

**Better Beginnings Update**

Lorraine McKelvey provided details on phase I findings from the Better Beginnings evaluation and shared the data collection process for phase II. Of all Better Beginnings components, Environmental Assessment is the strongest because it utilizes the Environment Rating Scales (ERS). Over a period of 30 years they have become the most widely used quality measures in ECE practice and research.

There is a movement in the field to require all teachers be bachelors prepared. A major focus of phase II is to increase voluntary participation in Better Beginnings. Providers

and non-providers are being surveyed to collect more information related to participant involvement in the program and how it affects the quality of care. The full report can be found at <http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com/child-care-resources/>.

### **Strategic Plan / Goals Update**

Tonya Russell discussed the DCCECE management staff's planning retreat held in December. She asked Commissioners to review the tool and provide feedback as needed.

## **IV. New Business**

### **Parent Focus Groups**

Stacey Jones of Ariel Strategic Communications presented findings on how/why families make certain choices in child care from information gathered during parent focus groups. The Communications Group was charged with managing communications to create awareness and promote usage of the rating system statewide.

The study was designed to:

- Identify emotional and rational decision - making factors for parents/caregivers when they choose a childcare provider for their children.
- Develop research - based recommendations for inserting a statewide childcare provider rating system into the decision - making process for parents/caregivers.
- Identify barriers for adaptation of a statewide childcare provider ratings system.

The full report is available upon request.

### **AR Youth Development Institute**

Laveta Wills-Hale spoke about the mission of the AR Youth Development Institute, which is to create safe, healthy, and enriching experiences for Arkansas youth during out of school times. She also spoke about the goal of the Institute, which is to strengthen, expand and sustain Arkansas' school-based and school-linked services to children and youth, ages 4-19, during out of school time. More information can be found at [www.aosn.org](http://www.aosn.org). Laveta also asked the group to register for an information webinar to be held on January 28<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 -2:00 p.m. CST.

### **The Positive Youth Development Act**

Paul Kelly of the AR Advocates for Children and Families provided an overview of upcoming legislation. A bill draft of the Act was provided to the group.

### **TIPS and AI's Pals Evaluation / ARRA Funding**

Patti Bokony shared the project goals and results of the TIPS evaluation. The project targeted programs that served children from low-income families. The feasibility and acceptability are evidenced in that all the centers participating in TIPS chose to continue implementing TIPS/Family Map in the 2010-2011 school year. Additional content training is needed to continue to increase teacher knowledge of the content of TIPS topics. TIPS was awarded the SAMHSA award. Ivory Daniels reported that all CCDF eligibility staff including supervisors have been trained on TIPS.

Providers selected to the Intervention group each received an AI's Caring Pals kit and monthly training from January – May 2010. They also used the materials with the children in their care during that period. Seeing a reduction in behavioral problems after only five months of exposure to the program was a positive sign.

### **ASQ / ASQ-SE Pilot Project**

Porsha Hart reported that phase I, a feasibility pilot of the use of the ASQ and the ASQ-SE, has been completed. Overall, parents reported positive feelings about the implementation; providers reported being prepared by the training to use the ASQ.

### **ASQ / ASQ-SE Phase II Evaluations**

Dr. Leanne Whiteside-Mansell discussed the plans for implementing the use of the ASQ in Arkansas early child care centers (phase II) and how the process will be evaluated. The plan during phase II is to increase R&R regions and providers.

## **V. Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.