Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) Retreat

October 19, 2023

**Agenda**

1. Call to Order
2. Welcome
3. Review Agenda & Meeting Purpose
4. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes
5. Subcommittee Reports
6. EI Division Director's Report
7. Strategic Visioning Discussion
8. Closing & Next Steps

Voting members in attendance: Asha Abdullahi, Serra Acar, Melissa Adams, Zulmira Allcock, Rebecca Brink, Mallorie Brown, Johan de Besche, Scott Greer, Cassandra Greeno, Michelle Grewal, Chris Hunt, Alexandra Nano, Juliane Nelson, Colleen O’Brien, Cambria Russell, Lori Russell, Elizabeth Small, Dina Tedeschi, Madi Wachman, Colleen Wellman, Jheanell West, Emily White

General public in attendance: Heather Biedrzycki, Mary Bishop, Faith Bombardier, Cheryl Bruk, Maura Buglione, Amy Capelle, Ronald Cen, Alex Chatfield, Karen Collins, Michelle Conlon, Liz Cox, Laura Crosby, Maggie Finnegan, Bob Gagnon, Molly Gilbride, Robbie Goldstein, Brittany Gorman, Paulo Guilhardi, Dawn Gutro, Tom Innis, Elizabeth Jones, Chrissy Kammel, Patti Kuzmeski, Karen LaPan, Karen Lopez, Tanya Maher, Anne Marsh, Kris Martone Levine, Maura Murphy, Jessica Nuhubian-Boisvert, Lianne Renaud, Barbara Sanna Collins, Leslie Sicliano, Denise Spencer, Joanne Sweeney, Laurie Tobey-Freeman, Charlie Werefield, Pam Wolfe, Leah Yohannes,

Quorum met and call to Order at 10:34 am by Chris Hunt. Commissioner Goldstein introduced by Dina Tedeschi (ICC co-chair).

Welcome address from MA Department of Public Health (DPH), Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD PhD. Spoke of the importance of this gathering, and our coming together to support the work of the EI system and families. Reviewed the purpose of the ICC, focusing on advising and assisting the lead agency. Highlighted the experience and size of our system, and how we meet the needs of families. Recognized the necessary diversity of the ICC to holistically strengthen the EI system. Spoke of our child outcome data, shrinking workforce, and challenges ahead and our lead agencies commitment to grow and strengthen our system.

Review of agenda by Chris Hunt. We will be working with Gibbous group on our strategic plan for the ICC moving forward and have group discussions to come later. Logistics review of the day presented including scheduling and location information.

Subcommittee report outs presented.

* Membership presented by Colleen O’Brien; Charged with developing membership and recruitment engagement plan as well as conducting a membership gap analysis. The background check process has caused more gaps. Proposed the MA EICC Handbook for approval and developed a system for membership succession planning.
* Fiscal/Operations presented by Zulmira Allcock. Charged with recommending fiscal monitoring procedures to support effective audits conducted by EI Division. The upcoming rate change the field is waiting for. Requirements for upcoming federal audit. This year there will be a focus on additional training recommendations for EI staff to understand fiscal requirements and system. Discussed a possible flyer for families to explain how the fiscal system works in EI.
* Family Engagement presented by Dina Tedeschi. Charged with NCSEAM survey work to increase representativeness and decrease nonresponse bias. Recommend single page graphic for families stressing importance of survey and its function, including overview for survey for families to know what to expect, creation of best practices based on success of high performing programs, and utilizing identified touchpoints for families to promote and increase survey recognition.
* Racial Equity presented by Johan De Besche. Charged with membership recruitment and engagement plan and membership gap analysis. Covered screening for all regarding racial equity beliefs, and access to trainings for the field.

Director's report at 10:56am by Dr Emily White, EI Division Director and MA Part C Coordinator. Warm welcome and acknowledgement of system resilience and commitment of the members of the ICC. The theme was hard things are hard, and we do hard things.

Hard things we have done successfully:

* improved child outcomes- reviewed 5 years of federal indicator #3 data. We have improvements and stability across all parts of indicator 3. Spoke of the systems change required to raise data from FFY21-FFY22. Acknowledged four programs that made significant differences across all indicators.
* Documenting missing reasons for delay of timely services: reviewed data on service analysis of timeliness of delivery of services. Spoke of work from Research and Analysis Unit and Performance Evaluation & Oversight team to correct the issue with the EI Programs- down from 980 to 24 undocumented reasons for delay.
* Increased response rates for NCSEAM Impacts on Family Survey: spoke of why our response rates matter and how the information is being analyzed, reviewed response rates by region. Increase from 26% statewide average to 56% (115% improvement statewide). Highlighted specific programs that were most improved. Actions taken include real time data dashboard, weekly data updates, feedback, and TA, incentivization for increased response rates.

Hard things we need to do:

* + - Changes to who receives NCSEAM survey coming- we will implement census approach to survey as opposed to sampling plan per Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). This will go into effect 7/1/2024.
    - Increase number of children who will receive two Batelle Developmental Inventory (BDI). Our current rate is 71.88% and we need a minimum of 80%. We had poor scores in our data completeness- we did not evaluate enough children in the EI system to receive a higher score from OSEP.
    - Implementation of new eligibility tool- we will be shifting from BDI-2 to the BDI-3 for determination of eligibility to be used across the MA EI System. Rationale of the decision to select BDI-3 was discussed, and state fiscal support for the shift was discussed. Timeline and implementation plan forthcoming and will be challenging.
    - Changes to Local Monitoring process: key clarification that under IDEA state programs are required to monitor providers to ensure all IFSP services are being delivered as written on IFSP. We currently do not have the data to do this. Reviewed clarifications from OSEP in General Supervision Guidance that was issued in July 2023, and the impacts on our monitoring system, including specific enforcement in instances where local EI Programs come up at less than 100% compliance.
    - Obtaining complete encounter data: reviewed reports outlining FY23 expenditure data with data from commercial insurers, MA Health, and DPH. Highlighted data that is incomplete from encounter claims (unknown payors) totaling 17 million dollars. We must correct this.

Will you help us? Looking to the ICC through this process to do the following:

* Develop implementation plan for census approach.
* Develop plan for BDI-3 implementation.
* Revise integrated monitoring & compliance procedures.
* Obtain missing fiscal data.

Questions from the audience were taken by Dr White. Outstanding data collection questions will be addressed by the EI Division Data Manager and follow up will occur. Question raised about how we can support families to understand these changes. The ICC has lost three members across disciplines and representations (family, community, and provider), that did not feel comfortable completing the background check required by the Govenor’s office. Question raised about how to increase the diversity of the ICC to include the perspectives brought to the group. Would like to see legislative updates shared at meetings.

12:10 BREAK

Meeting called back to order at 12:36pm

Presentation by Tom Innis from Gibbous LLC on the ICC Strategic planning framework review.

Overview of this portion of the session:

Icebreaker- what inspired you to attend today’s session?

Federal Regulations of the ICC- reviewed the required duties and activities of the ICC per 303.604 and 303.605.

Strategic framework- Steering Committee has been meeting since July 2023 to start these discussions. Presented the vision developed that focuses on:

* quality of care (providing the quality and quantity of care necessary to children and families)
* program support (ensuring programs have the means to serve families equitably)
* databased decision making ((using data to make informed decisions about best practices)

Strategic framework outlines the overarching goal of ‘The ICC will serve as a critical advisory goal to MA Part C to enhance quality, responsiveness, and outcomes’. The focus of our efforts (pillars), actions, and measures of success. This plan centers family voice and equity across all pillars. Efforts focus on service quality and compliance, service integration, fiscal sustainability, and equity. Actions for each of these pillars are outlined below.

**Service Quality**- inform and guide policies to improve hiring and recruitment of diverse workforce, review staff supports and training, monitor federal reporting and disaggregated reporting to improve equity, review general supervision (reviewing findings and subcommittee to support action planning).

**Service Integration**- supporting cross agency collaboration (leveraging impact of ICC members, identify agency level partnership opportunities, & seeking opportunities for “child find”), supporting cross program collaboration (especially with EIBI providers), identify opportunities to enhance public outreach and awareness, guide opportunities to support children who don’t qualify for EI services and those exiting EI, ensure continuity of care for families experiencing homelessness and immigrant communities.

**Fiscal Sustainability**- review fiscal status and support priority development (reviewing reporting and IDEA [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act] appropriations), guide Fiscal Subcommittee(provide sounding board to EI Division fiscal team), and review EI spending to identify and build capacity to tie EI dollars to reducing structural racism.

**Equity**- Monitor federal reporting and disaggregated reporting to improve equity (including State Performance Plan [SPP] & Annual Performance Report [APR]), inform impact of General Supervision activities on enhancing equity/reducing disparities, support implementation, MA-C’s General Education Provision Act [GEPA] section 427 plan, guide EI’s ability to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services (elevating family voices and reviewing when/where families withdraw and understanding these driving factors), propose initiatives to reduce structural barriers to services

Breakout discussions- the room was split into four groups. Each group reviewed each pillar and discussed the following:

* How will these efforts move us towards our goal?
* How can we enhance our advisory role?

Report out from large group.

**Service Quality and Compliance**- long discussions about recruitment and retention efforts and personnel requirements, funding for supervision, and how to ensure the drive for compliance doesn’t adversely affect services, higher education participating in personnel subcommittee, this is a great opportunity to include equity in all training (specifically BDI-3), lack of data in certain spaces, rebranding of EI so families associate it positively, shift in work force culture, strengthening partnerships with higher education.

**Service Integration-** discussions included resources available to children who aren’t eligible for EI, and utilizing new members to ICC who are community advisors, enhancing transition supports (Part B and medically complex children), membership discussions to harness different areas of expertise, recommend change from “ensure continuity of care” to “monitor continuity of care”, cross program collaborations, how to share information on what EI is and what EI isn’t, interagency agreements and understanding of the EI system, as staff are leaving EI programs there are gaps in supporting new staff (lack of supervisors/people to assist with licensure), looking to improve engagement with families involved in DCF, possible use of family ambassadors to support new families, increase awareness of self-referral- help with family education prenatally (milestones, etc).

**Fiscal Sustainability-** discussions included possible federal funds or grants beyond current sources, retention of staff is critical, rates and day-to-day operation costs not included in this, need for competitive rates, how do we provide services that aren’t billable, ensuring families understand their family voice and what they have access to.

**Equity-** there were a lot of questions about some of the terminology used in the framework. Discussions about disaggregated data, and different data sources and how to capture all the reasons families may leave the EI system, resources that can assist in building Culturally Linguistically Appropriate Services [CLAS], how to hire a workforce that meets our needs as a system, increasing support to eliminate gaps between English and non-English speaking families (more education to clinics and pediatricians to support families earlier), discussions about barriers families have to engagement, need services that fit into different families lives, video access, access to interpreters, issues with transportation, screening, equity in telehealth.

**Next steps-** revisions to the Strategic Plan for the ICC will be made with the ICC Steering Committee based on feedback today. Possible developments of new Subcommittees. Next meeting will be December 7, 2023.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:43 pm

Respectfully submitted by Liz Cox