

EARLY LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER REGION 7
LOCAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
Wednesday, January 15, 2025
10:30AM TO 12:00PM
MINUTES

Welcoming:

- Introduction of the ELRC Team
- Announcement of Rachelle Abbott as new President and CEO of STEP
- Thank you to Head Start for hosting.

Overview of Head Start: Carolyn Hawk and Laurel Cowher presented:

- Head Start began an 8-week program in 1965 and grew over 50 years into full year programs. The program is funded by the state at no cost to the families.
- There is a wait list in Lycoming and Clinton Counties
- The Child Count in 24-25: Preschool total 423, EHS total 131 and unduplicated is 554.
- 23-24 expenditures are over \$9mil.
- Education: Head Start teachers have the same qualifications as kindergarten teachers. There are three staff in each classroom with 17-18 children in preschool classes with scheduled activities. Creative Curriculum is based on home visiting, infant toddler, and preschool. Ages and Stages are used as they assessment tool. Within 45 days a child must have on file well child check, dental examination within the last 6 months, and immunizations must be up to date. They have mobile dentistry. They use a wholistic approach with the families. The policy council is made up of parents and community members.
- At least 10% of enrolled children are required to be diagnosed with a disability. Currently, we are at 25%. 3 of 4 children are identified as homelessness.
- Q/A: Carolyn will provide data on enrollments.
- South Williamsport Superintendent is looking to collaborate with Head Start to overcome barriers and willing to open services and advocate for all children in Lycoming County.
- Social Services: Each class has a family advocate. Each family can be involved with their child's education.
- Carolyn and Laurel gave a Tour of the building.

Conversations:

- Tracy Weaver with PENNAEYC is an advocate for all ECE and is an advocate for funding. She will share information to get into Head Start classrooms.
- Kim Luxenberger – PDO has a pot of money for Pre-k, HSSP, for staff that do have credentials, and PDP is funding students to get degreed.

- Ron with the United Way is an advocated for childcare locally and statewide in which the #1 issue is funding. They key part of the United Way is to 'Take Action'! There must be talking points about workforce development, and we must be the voices for parents and children in our communities.
- Q/A: Marti Moorhead Family Childcare Homes contracting with Head Start would be looked at the OCDEL level.

What's New in ELRC:

- Melissa shared successes during COVID such as "A Day without Childcare" publication and the development of our Resource Mapping. Melissa notes that with the great discussion of ECE concerns we are refocusing the LLC by developing intentional long-term initiatives and goals that will address the concerns of advocacy and acting without duplicating services.
- Ron explains 211: National Information System and the importance and shares the struggle of keeping it updated.

Initiatives:

- Meghann discussed the purpose and expectations of the Local Leadership Council Initiative Survey. The survey was developed using the insights from the 2024 community assessment. The LLC will collaborate on the initiatives with the partners. The survey will get sent out as a JotForm and get returned to the ELRC.
- Melissa shares out about Rapid Response:
 - PDG monies – Goal is to avoid suspension and expulsion. The RRT is strictly a short-term approach, hopefully facilitating long term solutions.
 - The process will include ECE providers, classroom teachers, family, child, and community resources in a multi-tiered approach.
 - The Collaborative approach will support ECE programs struggling with challenging behaviors, reduce the risk of suspension/expulsion, collect data on the number of suspensions/expulsions happening and the success rate of interventions, will be collaborative and short-term and will facilitate quick referrals and warm hand off to partner programs (e.g. EI, IECMH, Home Visitation, Behavioral Health).
 - Quick summary of the process:
 - Our Coaches will continue to assist providers in development and implementation of a Suspension and Expulsion Policy.
 - The providers should implement the plan that will include a referral to RRT as needed. The goal is to get the referral before there is an incident that leads to immediate suspension or expulsion.
 - Program staff will do an on-line request prior to expelling or suspending child.
 - ELRC RRT will respond with-in 48 hours.
 - That response will be to do intake. Gather information, get release from p/c, etc.
 - Team member will then work to set up an observation.
 - There will be a 2-pronged observation.
 - One of our quality coaches will be there to observe environment factors and we will have a mental health specialist there to observe as well.
 - A plan will be developed.
 - There will be a team meeting including observers, teacher, director, and family.
- Q/A: Carloyn sits on Lycoming/Clinton system of care.

Mapping:

- Interactive Resource Map
- In 2019 The ELRC received a Preschool Development Grant (PDG) through Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to create an asset map for Lycoming, Clinton, and Tioga Counties. Fiscally, we are now maintaining the cost of the map. In partnership with Lycoming County Planning and Community Development, Amy Fry created the Interactive Map using the Geographical Information System (GSI). This is the same technology used to create the County Parcel Map. County Assets or as we refer to as Community Resources are organized under 24 Coordinating Service Providers, Community Resources are mapped in these service areas by the services that the agency provides. Community Resources may be found under multiple service areas to educate the community on the variety of services the agency may provide. The map is best used by using on category at a time and zooming in. The purpose of the map is to provide the community a way to advocate for themselves, to assist agencies with an easy way to meet their clients' needs and to expand the reach of Community Resources to everyone. United Churches of Lycoming County have a paper version of these services for Lycoming County. The ELRC uses United Churches guide for clients that do not wish to use online resources. The ELRC is asking our partners to have some ownership moving forward with the Interactive map. As we complete the first major update of the map, we are asking partners to access the map and look at their own agency information, then provide the ELRC with any updates that are needed. The ELRC is asking partners to help the ELRC expand the access to the community. The ELRC is asking that partners to use the JotForm on the ELRC7 website to update any changes to their program. Ways to expand access to the map. The ELRC is partnering with the B/S/T Early Learning Coalition to expand the map to cover five counties. I wear the QR code on my work badge. I have the QR code is on my phone lock screen. The QR code is in the signature of my email. The ELRC can provide tare offs and post cards.
- Tare off sheets were provided in folder at today's meeting. PDFs of tare off and post cards will be sent with minutes. QR images and instruction sheet will be sent in the minutes. A PDF of the United Churches of Lycoming County Resource Guide.

Lycoming County ARP Funding Update:

- ELRC7 Website now live.
 - Section dedicated to partners: LLC info, Community Assessment, Ways to Partner, Updating Interactive Resource Map information.
 - First free PD training for ECE staffs is January 25th, virtually.
- Substitute Aide Pool Program
 - Ready to expand into Tioga- need to identify a funding source for that county.
 - Looking to work with area school districts offering ECE education pathways on potential collaboration- offering real world experience through SAPP

Meeting Wrap up:

- E-mail the ELRC program updates, anything new that is happening, any requests for assistance and most importantly any outcomes you to report.
- Melissa will follow up with information to narrow down choices and to gather additional information regarding the survey results. Please give thought to the goals we have narrowed down as the ELRC will as well. We would like to be ready to work at our April meeting.

Attachments:

- Glossary of Terms
- Tear-off
- UCLC Resources
- Map QR Codes

Agenda Items that were not covered at the meeting

- Child Care Works – Fully staffed, Tioga office will be staffed, there is a waitlist.
- Provider Appreciation Conference – Save the Date – Friday, April 11th, and Saturday April 12th. Registration will begin Monday, January 27th, 2025.
- Partner updates: jlsweet@stepcorp.org
 - Free Community Events
 - Additional updates to share.

Contact Information:

- SAPP - Meghann McBryan mdmcbryan@stepcorp.org
- Mapping - Jennifer Sweet jlsweet@stepcorp.org
- General - Teresa Frierson tafrierson@stepcorp.org
- General - Melissa Kerschner mjkerschner@stepcorp.org

Next Meeting is Wednesday, April 16th. Location TBD.

Respectfully Submitted,



Teresa Frierson, Provider/Collaboration Manager
Early Learning Resource Center Region 7, STEP, Inc.