



Local Interagency Council 16
Date: March 11th, 2015 @ Noon

Location: Tazewell Mason Co. Special Education Association

Minutes

I. Participants:

Marsha Streicher, CFC/LIC
JoEllen Skolek/El Paso Unit #11
Amber Ealey/TMCSEA
Tracey Arahood/Easter Seals
Joni Lyons/HOI-SFS
Marianne House/PCCHD
Erica Strunk/CFC #14

Gene Seaman/HRA
Bonnie Cohrs/DSCC
Jim Runyon/Easter Seals
Gary Reed/CFC #14
Kelly Lenz/ CFC #14 & #16
Stephanie McGinnis/Advocates for Access
Anne Risen/Pekin #108

II. Minutes from January 14th

1st motion: Jim R.
2nd motion: Joni L.
Minutes approved.

III. Spotlight from TMCSEA/Amber Ealey

Amber explained how the TMSEA is decentralized, each cooperating school district has its own referral processes and services. TMCSEA does have specialists on staff, such as Hearing/Vision, OT, PT, Speech/Language who may go out to a cooperating school district when their services are needed at various schools. Schramm School, which also houses the TMCSEA offices, is the most restrictive placement for children with special needs. The schools in partnership will do everything possible to keep children in their home/neighborhood school, but a multiply or significantly impaired child may attend Schramm to receive the services above and beyond what their home district can provide. These type of placement options are discussed at the IEP meeting. TMCSEA also has a coordinator who goes out to the members of the coop to see what choices/options they may have to keep the child in the home school.

IV. Jim Runyon, Easter Seals

- a. Jim is the fiscal agent for CFC #14 & #16, and first spoke to the group as that representative. He reported that CFC #14 is up 164 referrals from last year. He also announced the upcoming Special Needs Fair at the Peoria Civic Center on Tuesday, March 17th, and that April is Autism Awareness month. Easter Seals has several workshops that are scheduled in April for those interested in learning more about Autism
- b. Jim is also the Government Affairs representative at Easter Seals. In his position as governmental affairs, he covers 28 counties throughout central Illinois and has many contacts with state legislators. Jim explained to the group how the Fiscal Year 15 budget, which ends June 30th, has a 1.6 billion shortfall and how Governor Rauner is proposing how that shortfall is filled. 1. Fund Sweep-where the governor suggests the legislators pull funds in from other state processes. 2. Gov. Rauner is looking at all-state grants and would pull any grant that is "non-essential" and then hold those funds in reserve to fill the shortfall in the 4th quarter. This proposal could affect grant programs such as the Autism Program at Easter Seals. 3. "Let's raise more money" is the 3rd option to fill the FY 15 shortage but Jim explained how Gov. Rauner won't consider raising taxes at this time.
- c. The proposed budget for FY 16 isn't looking any better with the shortfall in money ranging up to 2-3 billion dollars. Governor Rauner suggest many programs will be cut significantly with EI receiving a 23 million dollar cut. To achieve that level of savings, he proposes raising the current 30% delay requirement up to a 50% delay. This would have a huge impact on all EI services. The CFC would lose 50-65% of the children that are currently being served. Also, with the proposed Medicaid cuts, 66% percent of the children served through EI would not have other options, such as private insurance programs. The end result would impact school districts who will receive these children who have not had any services prior to entering schools. Providers who work through agencies or as



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independents would also be affected by the cuts when they lose over half the children they currently are supporting through their services.

- d. Illinois is already in the bottom half of the 50 states for the EI eligibility rate, but will slide down to the lowest in 5 states if this eligibility qualification is initiated. Jim thinks children already in EI would probably be “grandfathered” in the new system but any child just coming to EI would have to meet the new requirements, however, this may not hold true.
- e. “What will the CFC do?” CFC employees are employed through Dept. of Human Services, which is a state agency and cannot “lobby” using their professional time or professional equipment or risk losing status as a 501c3 entity (non-profit). Providers and families can advocate and should if they want to maintain the status quo of funding and eligibility requirements. Jim shared email addresses of area legislators so they can be contacted.
- f. These messages are okay to be shared with families. 1. To Parents, “This is about kids” ½ of the kids won’t be identified until they are in schools”. 2. Every \$1 spent in EI saves \$7 down the road. 3. To Providers: “This is still about the kids, but also affects my business/job”. There are currently 55 business in the area that work through Early Intervention and at a minimum number, 145 therapists who will be affected by the proposed changes. Gov. Rauner is a business man and Republican members must understand that proposed cuts will negatively impact these small business and result in job losses.
- g. These changes have to be approved by the state House and Senate. If they can agree on a new budget before May 31st, the budget could be approved by a simple majority. If the budget is delayed, and probably will be, it will take a 3/5 vote to pass. At this time, Democrats control the House and Senate, but will require Republicans to join them in passing a budget so it is likely that the May 31st deadline will be missed and the session continued into the summer.
- h. 25 local agencies are meeting with local legislators to discuss these cuts and the opposition to the proposals on March 13th at Easter Seals.

V. LIC 16/Manager’s Report/Gary Reed

- a. The proposed cuts are concerning. 372 children will go unsupported in the CFC#14 5 county area.
- b. 7-8 service coordinators would be laid off or let go. LIC coordinator, Social Emotional consultant and Parent Liaison positions could also be affected.
- c. Referrals-Feb. 2014-80
Feb. 2015-85 - So far, March referral numbers have been down, no explanation for that at this time
- d. Natural Environments-still going up, CFC is currently at 89%.
- e. TPC’s up to 93% occurring within the age range.
- f. Wait list #'s: OT-10 children on the wait list in Tazewell & Woodford Co.’s
PT-38 children on wait list,
(22 in Peoria Co., 13 in Tazewell Co., 3 in Woodford Co).
Feeding Therapy-is under served in Peoria Co., wait list
- g. DeLayne Deiss is back at the CFC and is starting to develop a caseload.
- h. Gary, Marsha and Kelly are meeting with Tina Aronson and Mary Beth Arduini on Friday, March 20th to discuss how to get more cooperation from medical personnel
- i. Discussed and voted on purchasing binders/dividers which will contain agency or program information for 0-3 programs and 3-5 programs. 26 binders will be purchased for a maximum of \$250. These binders will be distributed to medical facilities in the Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford Co. areas. Additional binders may be purchased at a later date to more fully cover this large area. Members of the LIC who wish to include their information in the



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binders should get in touch with Marsha. Marianne H. motioned to approve this expenditure, Joni 2nd the motion, it was passed.

VI. Committees: Group Discussion & Reports

We opted to not have committee discussions at this meeting as the proposed changes in EI & discussions used up a lot of time.

VII. Program Updates/Announcements/Upcoming Area Events:

- a. Tazewell Co. Health Dept.-Safe Sleep: Preventing Infant Deaths, March 31st @ Embassy Suites, East Peoria. Mail registration (50\$) to Tazewell Co. Health Dept, Attn: Beth, 21306 Il Rt.9, Tremont Il., 61568
- b. Heart of Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children, Spring Conference 2015, April 17-18th@ Peoria Civic Center, register @<http://PlayinPeoria2015.eventbee.com/event?eid=176922313>
- c. Kindergarten Transition Fair, Hult Center on Saturday, April 25th
- d. Pekin Family Education Center, Community Fair, Tuesday, May 5th at the Center
- e. Mental Health Forum-Saturday, March 25th @ Bradley University

Next LIC meeting: Wednesday, April 8th

Location: The Center for Prevention of Abuse, 720 W. Joan Court, Peoria

Time: 12pm-1:30pm (approx.)

LIC 16 Mission Statement:

The Local Interagency Council is a collaborative group of local providers, public agencies and families who work together to support the Early Childhood community through Public Awareness activities, Child Find and Transitions into local school districts. The LIC will strive to strengthen communities, empower families and advocate for the development of children ages birth to 5.