



Early Childhood Advisory Council

April 16, 2025
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Attendees: Kara Wente, Rachel Rayburn, Alicia Leatherman, Carrie Beier, Elisha Cangelosi, Robyn Lightcap, Erin Simmons, Steve Beha, Tabitha Jones-McKnight, Maggie Gons, Wendy Grove, Paula Grieb, Julie Stone, Stephanie Kowal, Karen Lampe, Susan Peet, Twinkle French Schottke, Tia Marcel Moretti, Melissa Weber-Mayrer, Kirstin Toth, Piper Halliday, Marisa Rohn, Scott Kelly, Lynanne Gutierrez

Welcome and Introductions

Kara Wente, DCY

- Agenda Overview
 - Updates on the Proposed Transition to the Children and Youth Advisory Council (CYAC)
 - CYAC Subcommittee Summary
 - CYAC Application Process
 - 26/27 Kid's Budget Initiatives Across State Agencies
 - Literacy Achievement and Academic Success Update
 - Budget Highlights Across Agencies
 - DCY Big Goals and Budget Requests
- Susan Peet Update
 - Bowling Green State University has approved a project for the fall semester.
 - Project: How to take training modules that primarily have standalone things and fuse into our course content. When students graduate not only will they have a degree but will have work ready competencies where they could be a step ahead.
 - Need: Susan will be creating a master list of trainings that are available. Susan is asking for everyone's help to identify high quality modules and training. Specifically looking for Early Childhood content as well as HHS.

Update on Proposed Transition to CYAC

Alicia Leatherman, DCY

- Through the budget we have the opportunity to broaden this group from the Early Childhood Advisory Council to the Children and Youth Advisory Council to better reflect the continuum of services.
- Subcommittees:
 - Early Care & Education
 - Maternal & Infant Vitality
 - Early Identification, Inclusion & Home Visiting
 - Children's Services
 - Early Childhood Mental Health Services & Supports
 - Workforce
- What to expect:
 - Each subcommittee is chaired by a community stakeholder who is a member of CYAC
 - Subcommittee meetings will be supported by the associated DCY lead
 - All interested stakeholders must apply/re-apply to the council for consideration
 - CYAC members can serve on one subcommittee



- Each subcommittee will meet at regular intervals to make recommendations to be shared by the subcommittee chair to the CYAC
- Subcommittee meetings will be virtual, in-person as needed, ad hoc/rescheduled as needed
- CYAC Application Process
 - Applications are LIVE now on DCY's website:
 - Visit childrenandyouth.ohio.gov and search "Early Childhood Advisory Council" in the search bar
 - [Early Childhood Advisory Council](#)
 - Please use the fillable pdf form, follow the instructions, and submit it via email to Lily Clossman
 - Lillian.Clossman@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov
 - Applications are due 5/9
 - In your submission email include your subcommittee interests, if not previously shared

26/27 Kid's Budget Initiative Across the Administration

Tia Marcel Moretti, OhioMHAS

- Update:
 - 90,000,000 in investments for brick-and-mortar crisis stabilization units.
 - MRSS has been incrementally growing and scaling to fidelity in over 50 counties, hopefully later this month the plan is to move it into all 88 counties.
 - Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) is a free service that provides immediate help for youth aged 20 and under who are experiencing overwhelming mental, emotional, or behavioral distress or trauma that is impacting their ability to function within their family, school, or community.
 - With MRSS, a team of trained professionals will respond within 60 minutes of being called to a young person's home, school, or any other location in the community. The MRSS team helps calm the situation by offering immediate de-escalation, ensuring everyone is safe, and creating a plan for comprehensive wraparound care with up to 42 days of ongoing support.
 - \$12M to lift universal prevention curriculum. Universal prevention gives all young people skills that create durable workforce resiliency and complex skills.
 - Efforts in budget to grow the workforce.
 - 988 took a hit in the budget, more education needs to be done within the Senate.

Melissa Weber-Mayrer, DEW

- Update:
 - Literacy Highlights
 - ReadOhio
 - Third grade guarantee
 - Dyslexia Support Laws
 - Ohio's Reading Competencies
 - High-Quality Instructional Materials in English Language Arts
 - Professional Development in the Science of Reading
 - Literacy Coaching
 - Governor's Science of Reading Champion Award



- Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant
- Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement
 - *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* articulates a state literacy framework to promote proficiency in reading, writing, and communication for all learners.
 - State Literacy Team convened in 2022 and 2024 to provide feedback, recommendations, and guidance in the development of an updated plan.
 - Updated plan reaffirms Ohio's commitment to raising literacy achievement, aligned with Ohio's policies for literacy instruction, ReadOhio initiatives, and the science of reading.
 - Major changes include:
 - Streamlined structure
 - Bolstered language and information on tiered systems of instructional support, including intervention and enrichment
 - A focus on implementation science to guide installation of literacy systems
 - Commitments, strategies and activities to reflect the Department's priorities and items outlined in House Bill 33, including how integrated policies intersect to support literacy instruction.
- Science of Reading Professional Development
 - <https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Literacy/The-Science-of-Reading/Professional-Development-in-the-Science-of-Reading/Ohio-s-Introduction-to-the-Science-of-Reading-Courses-Overview-Revised-July-2024.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>
- High-Quality Instructional Materials
 - 89 evidence-based reading intervention programs
- DEW Budget Highlights
 - House Sub-Bill Budget Highlights
 - Funding for Literacy GRF and Coaching
 - Continues Science of Reading Professional Development requirement, with expanded roles (includes school psychologist and SLPs)
 - Competency-based refresher training in the science of reading every five years
 - Tutoring for students on Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans (RIMPS) can occur during student's regular instruction time
 - Budget Changes/Removals from Executive
 - Universal K-3 diagnostic for literacy and math
 - EMIS reporting for Science of Reading Professional Development
 - Report card changes for Early Literacy
 - Educational Regional Service System
 - Less funding for Integrated Model Curriculum



- Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)
- Requirement to reading-related Disadvantaged Pupil Impact Aide (DPIA) expenditures for LEAs required to submit a Reading Achievement Plan

Tabitha Jones-McKnight, ODH

- Update:
 - Ohio Student Eye Exam (OhioSEE) Program.
 - Aims to provide comprehensive eye exams and glasses to children kindergarten through third grade.
 - Expects to serve 33,000 children over the next two years.
 - School-Based Health Centers (SBHC).
 - Aims to implement 23 new SBHCs and expand services at nine existing sites.
 - Children’s Dental Services Program.
 - Aims to provide dental care for children in nine Health-Professional-Shortage Areas (HPSAs) with no safety net dental clinics.

Alicia Leatherman and Elisha Cangelosi, DCY

- Update:
 - Goal 1: Reduce Infant Mortality Rate
 - We are committed to making Ohio a national leader in protecting babies and mothers to be one of the top 10 states in infant care.
 - We aren’t just launching isolated programs; we’re building robust community partnerships and providing comprehensive, continuous support before and after birth. By empowering parents with vital education on environmental and behavioral risks, we aim to save an additional 300 precious lives annually.
 - For too long, Ohio ranked poorly in infant mortality — most recently at 43rd in the nation—and we refuse to accept that status quo.
 - Our groundbreaking Partner for Change grant with Cradle Cincinnati seeks to build upon their incredible progress that has already reduced infant mortality in Hamilton County through deep community collaboration and, most importantly, by listening to moms. Preliminary 2024 data (January through November) shows a promising decline to an infant mortality rate of 6.5, down from 7.1—the lowest rate in years.
 - To build on this success, we are requesting additional investment to expand community and faith-based grants, enhance parenting and pregnancy supports and further expand our evidenced-based Home Visiting programs. Ohio’s home visiting models — ranging from Healthy Families America to Nurse Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers— are tailored to meet community-specific needs. We’re also expanding Family Connects Ohio from 11 to 88 counties, ensuring every new Ohio family benefits from a free, personalized home visit by a registered nurse who offers expert guidance, resources, and critical community connections. Family Connects meets moms and babies where they are, when they need it with a tiered approach.



- The Vision
 - Aim: To be in the top 10 states for infant vitality
 - Target: Achieve an infant mortality rate of 4.4 deaths per 1,000 live births
 - Impact: Save an additional 330 babies per year
- Goal 2: Improve Kindergarten Readiness
 - Since 2019, with unwavering support from the Governor, we have dramatically expanded access to state child care, setting the stage for lasting educational and economic success for Ohio families.
 - Prior to this change Ohio had the lowest eligibility level in the nation.
 - In April, we unveiled the largest expansion to date — the Child Care Choice Voucher Program — which now supports families earning up to 200% of the federal poverty level. This means that a working family of four earning up to \$62,000 annually can receive assistance to secure quality child care while they pursue career or educational opportunities.
 - The Vision
 - Aim: Increase the percentage of children demonstrating readiness on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)
 - Target: 60% of children demonstrating readiness
 - Impact: More than 26,000 additional children prepared for academic success
- Goal 3: Reduce Rate of Children Entering Foster System
 - Building on Governor DeWine’s Children’s Services Transformation, we are intensifying our efforts to preserve families and support kinship and adoption services.
 - By engaging families proactively — addressing concerns when they are a question not a crisis — we plan to keep more than 3,300 children safely in their homes.
 - Between December 31, 2019, and December 31, 2024, we reduced the total number of children in the system from 16,455 to 14,213 — our lowest level since 2016.
 - New Child Wellness Campuses – Supported and recommended as priority by Children Services Working Group, PCSAO and CCAO.
 - Regional Wellness Campuses will create new placement and treatment options so that no children have to stay overnight in lobbies, or hotels, fewer displacements and quicker reunification with families.
 - State will provide one-time start-up costs for each region and one-time support for major metros. After year 2, the goal is to be sustainable through services.
 - Successful grantees will include:
 - Community partner support/agreements which explain the minimum population for the Child Wellness Campuses.
 - Staff must be representative of kids and families served.
 - Grantees will be selected by the following regions: Northwest, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, East Central and Metro Districts
 - The Vision
 - Aim: To be in the top 10 states for keeping children with their



families

- Target: Reduce the rate of children entering foster care to 2.0 per 1,000
- Impact: Keep more than 3,300 additional children in their homes

Steve Beha, DODD

- Update:
 - Largest impact on DODD system when it comes to waiver services: Increase direct support professionals wages, we have seen an impact through the DSP compensation survey and providers are stating they're able to increase capacity.
 - Technology and Employment: those have remained untouched in the House. Some examples are Regional Tech hubs that families with children can come learn about the different technology they can use, accessible resources they can use to keep their children safe at home and provide them with greater independence, Tech ambassadors that travel around the state and provide lived experience on how they use technology in their lives.
 - MSY: Flat funding survived the House.
 - Hope to keep the Keeping Families Together project – provide subsidies to county boards of DD
 - Crisis Intervention Training

Adjournment & Final Thoughts

Kara Wente, DCY

- Reminder – minutes, power point and slides will be placed on the team's site.