

MINUTES**June 11, 2009 – Marlboro, Massachusetts**

Members Present: Robin Adair, Maria Burke, Darleen Corbett, Jen DerBogossian, John Garcia, Jen Greco, Jack Harris, Peggy Lee, Margaret Mahoney, Anne Marsh, Neal Michaels, Sara Miranda, Kimber O’Connell, Nancy Phillips, Kathie Rose, Arlene Tannenbaum, Pam Wildnauer,
Joanne Williams.

Members Absent: Jennifer Amaya-Thompson, Richard Breault, Kristin Britton, Pat Cameron, Kelly Ann Coyne, Sandra Daly, Pam Kuechler, Karin Lifter, Therese Murphy-Miller, Jennifer O’Leary, Ronna Schaffer, Nancy Schwartz, Joanne Sweeney.

Non-Voting Committee Chairs in Attendance: Zulmira Allcock, Tom Miller, Peter Woodbury.

1. Welcome: Tri-Chair Margaret Mahoney welcomed the group. She also introduced Tri-Chairs Kimber O’Connell and Joanne Williams.

Approval of Minutes: The Minutes of the ICC meeting held March 12, 2009, were approved as written.

2. Director’s Report – Ron Benham: H1N1 Flu update: Today, the World Health Organization is expected to declare an H1N1 flu pandemic, because there are significant outbreaks all over the world. Ron encouraged members and attendees to consult the Department of Public Health website, www.mass.gov/dph, in order to receive up-to-date information.

Federal Part C Application: On May 28, the Department of Public Health submitted its Twenty-Third Year Part C Application to OSEP – the federal Office of Special Education Programs. The application was submitted with no change in eligibility, which remains at 30% delay. Our grant award will be about \$7.5 million. **Federal stimulus dollars for EI:** The first half of our federal stimulus funds for Part C – \$3.7 million – has been received in Massachusetts; it will be used to help cover the FY 09 funding shortfall. The second payment, another \$3.7 million, is expected in October; to receive it, Massachusetts must demonstrate Maintenance of Effort. Our state interprets MOE to be all funding for EI, not just state appropriation; a few states do it differently. The federal stimulus legislation includes a set-aside of \$71 million to be divided among states that choose to develop a 0-5 system of services. Only Maryland is seriously interested, and could receive up to 20% or \$14 million. The remainder would be reallocated and Massachusetts might receive about \$1 million of that. Ron noted that in spite of predictions, to date there has been no decrease in numbers of children in the Massachusetts EI system, and there is some overall increase in spending. Many factors are in play, making budget planning unusually complex.

State Budget Update: Three possible budget scenarios are in play. The House figure is \$29.3 million. The Senate figure is \$25.5 with outside budget language removing the insurance cap. The

Governor re-filed House One, as required, because revenues had fallen below a required level. In the new bill, EI was in the \$23 million range and included removal of the insurance cap. Ron expressed optimism for the outcome of the budget process, and thanked everyone who has advocated for the needs of EI children and families.

Thank you from parents: Darla Gundler introduced several parents, who thanked Peter Woodbury and Thom Child and Family Services for a contribution that enabled additional parents to attend the Annual Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium Conference in May.

Program Updates – Patti Fougere: Patti announced that Massachusetts is one of 45 states that were in full compliance with federal Part C monitoring requirements this past year. Programs will be notified very soon about monitoring visits planned for FY 2010. Visits will occur from August to October in order to allow ample time to make corrections before submission of next year's Part C Application. Procedures for data and Annual Report submission have been simplified, and program directors expressed their appreciation.

Haussein Award Recipients for 2008-2009: Kimber O'Connell introduced two Haussein Award recipients, and each spoke for a few minutes: **Kelley St. Clair (Criterion Heritage EI)** described Building our Village. Using the PAC as a springboard, parents planned events such as a family fun night, a pizza party, various workshops, and a conference. With the Haussein Award as seed money, they raised an additional \$4,500. **Christina Poirier (Family Support EI)** described Children and Family Literacy Workshops. There were three events – a program on bedtime routines related to literacy, a workshop on potty training, and a pajama party with planned activities.

Birth to Three Task Group Update – Robin Adair: Dr. Robin Adair is Co-Chair of the Early Education and Care Birth to School Age Task Force. Ron Benham, Darla Gundler, Neal Michaels, Ronna Schaffer and Jennifer Amaya-Thompson are also involved in the Task Force and its subcommittees, as are three EI Program Directors. The charge to the Task Force was to focus on outcomes and ways to measure them, with an eye toward interagency collaboration. Final recommendations are due in November, 2009.

Special Quest Presentation – Joanne Williams and Pam Wildnauer: Special Quest, which now focuses on the birth-to-five age group, brings together EI, Early Head Start, early child care, and parents, on behalf of children with special needs. A leadership team developed a vision statement and supported demonstration sites in Barnstable, Fall River and Holyoke. To become involved, a community can gather together the four players and then contact Pat Cameron for help to get started. Training materials are free at www.specialquest.org.

9. Committee Reports: Fiscal Committee – Peter Woodbury: Peter noted that a lot of changes are taking place and the budget scenario for FY 2010 is as yet unknown. DPH and Mass Health have made major changes in billing procedures, which the various practice management systems are working to implement. Stimulus money must be separately tracked by the state, and at the program level. In addition, it is critical to understand why numbers of children served are going up in spite of implementing 30% delay and 6-month reassessments for eligibility. **Standards Committee – Zulmira Allcock:** The committee is creating definitions that will enhance integration of children's mental health concepts in EI work. The committee is also discussing

collaborative ways to expand the supply of mental health professionals in EI and to provide loan forgiveness to enable potential staff to work in EI.

Specialty Services – Tom Miller: Topics of discussion have included timelines for transition, newborn hearing screening, and ways to identify and train contact people in each EI program who will act as in-house resource people for children with hearing loss. **Program Planning – Joanne Williams:** The committee presented a workshop at the MEIC Conference in May on integrating the ASQ-SE into assessments; it also continues discussing ways to support awareness of social-emotional developmental needs in EI programs. **Personnel Preparation Committee – Holly Newman for Rena Ginsberg:** The committee is revising the CSPD – the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development – along with working on its own strategic plan, and is working on a brochure on the importance of play in EI work. The recently-finished DVD, *Making a Difference – Careers in Early Intervention*, was shown, and Holly invited suggestions regarding distribution.

Member Updates: Neal Michaels, Director of EI and Special Projects at the Department of Children and Families, spoke about the Department’s interest in enhancing connections and training opportunities now that referrals from DCF to EI under CAPTA have reached the full implementation stage. It is challenging to develop consistent policies and procedures across the 29 DCF Area Offices. **Robin Adair** spoke about the required screening in primary care that is being implemented now that the MassHealth Children’s Behavioral Health Initiative is in place. An increase in referrals to EI is expected, but to date it has been difficult to determine – through the EI data system – whether this is actually happening. **Zulmira Allcock for Joanne Sweeney:** Zulmira distributed the latest MEIC advocacy statement regarding the needs of the EI system in the state budget process. She also reported that a small group of EI stakeholders met to craft language they would like to see included in the legislation that Autism Speaks is working on. The legislation is currently under review in the legal department at DPH.

Darla Gundler noted the dates of the Annual ICC Retreat: September 23-24, 2009. The first day will be for the entire EI community; the second day will be for members of the ICC and its committees. Darla also distributed the FY 2010 ICC meeting schedule, and alerted members that there are some changes in the rotation of meeting dates.

The ICC meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.