Meeting Minutes

Attending: Beth Bye, Commissioner, Office of Early Childhood; Bryan Klimkiewicz, Division Director, Bureau of Special Education, State Department of Education; Sarah Eagan, Office of the Child Advocate; Elisabeth Teller, Director, SARAH Inc. – Kidsteps; Donna Notti, Birth to Three Coordinator, Cheshire Public Schools; Deborah Richards, Director of Student Services, Capital Region Education Council CREC; Eric Protulis, Director of Pupil Services, ACES; Bridget Gordon-Hickey, Associate Executive Director of Student Support Services, LEARN

Special guests: Andrea Brinnel, Part B Coordinator, State Department of Education; Alice Ridgway, Part C Coordinator, Birth to Three System, Office of Early Childhood; Terry Carroll, CT Association of Public School Superintendents

Introductions
Commissioner Bye welcomed the members to the third meeting of the Preschool Special Education Working Group. Each of the members introduced themselves.

Summer Months
Alice Ridgway presented a draft summary of estimated cost of Birth to Three covering summer months for children who turn three as of May 1 or June 1 (through August 31), and are deemed eligible for Part B services. She used the last five years of data to arrive at an estimate.

The estimate presented is based on the highest possible cost at $120 an hour. If every service on the IFSP is provided at that rate, the estimated cost could be just over $1 million. Based on an estimate of 60% covered by Medicaid, the total state cost would be $600,000 with $400,000 in federal Medicaid funds.

Questions were raised whether school districts could share part of the cost. Andrea Brinnel noted that there likely would be little cost savings to the district by having some children served by Birth to Three because Part B summer extended year services would still need to delivered regardless of the number of children in the class.

It was noted that during the summer months, some parents want a lighter service touch and may not opt for extended Birth to Three services. In addition, some parents may opt for Part B extended year services because there is no fee while Birth to Three has a family cost participation fee. There was discussion whether May 1 or June 1 is the most appropriate cut-off date, with overall consensus for May 1.

Commissioner Bye said this important policy discussion with the goal to reduce multiple service transitions for the child.

Draft Outline of Report
Commissioner Bye provided a draft outline of the report and opened it up for discussion. Deborah Richards said the report must address the challenges of transition. Sarah Eagan suggested the report provide a section on transition outcomes to address the variability of the level of services by school
district. For example, some districts offer full-day and others half-day services. Eagan said the variability of services must be considered in how it affects children based on zip code, race, ethnicity, etc. Andrea Brinnel said that SDE is contracting with the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) to answer these data questions, but the report will not be ready in time for this report. Commissioner Bye said the report should reference the forthcoming NIEER report.

The working group reached consensus on the draft outline with the addition of transition challenges and a section on transition outcomes (see below).

**Next Steps**
The next step is to write a draft report to review at the final meeting on December 19. Working group members offered to write sections of the report – see the report outline below. The due date is December 12; members will submit the draft sections to the OEC. A reminder will be sent out to the authors December 9. After the report is reviewed at the December 19 meeting, final edits will be made. The report will be submitted to the Education Committee by January 1, 2020, pursuant to Public Act 19-184 - An Act Concerning Various Issues Relating to Special Education.

**Future Meetings**
The next meeting is December 19, 1 to 3 p.m., Room 1B, LOB.

**Adjournment**
The working group adjourned.
Birth to Three - Preschool Special Education Working Group Report

DRAFT OUTLINE

Introduction (to include challenges of transition) - Deborah Richards, CREC

  Overview of Part C - Alice Ridgway, OEC
  Overview of Part B / 619 - Bryan Klimkiewicz, Andrea Brinnel, SDE
  Differences and Similarities - Alice Ridgway, OEC; Bryan Klimkiewicz, Andrea Brinnel, SDE
  Summary of Exit data - Alice Ridgway, OEC

  Part C 7/1/18-6/30/19
  Part B 10/1/17-9/3018

Transition Outcomes – Sarah Eagan, Office of the Child Advocate

Children Exiting Birth to Three Not Eligible for an IEP in a Pre-K Setting – LEARN, ACES, CREC

  What is Currently Available to Families? Plan for Improvement
  Options for Building Local Resource Capacity
  Tracking Children - 3 and 6 month follow up
  ECE Provider Developmental Screening, i.e. ASQ, Sparkler
  Local Resource Packets – LEA develops and distributes

Children Exiting Birth to Three with an IEP Who Turn 3 in Late Spring of Summer Months – Deborah Richards, CREC

  Overview of the Issues
  Policy and Practice Considerations
  Cost Considerations Alice Ridgway, OEC

Birth to Five Early Childhood Intervention System – OEC, School Finance Project

  Overview of the Issues
  Policy and Practice Considerations
  Cost Considerations

Universal Preschool – Beth Bye, OEC

  Overview of the Issues
  Policy and Practice Considerations
  Cost Considerations

Summary of Practice and Policy Recommendations – OEC, SDE