

## **Conference Call – 12/3/07**

### ***ECEAP/Head Start Linkage proposal***

Joel gave a brief overview of the Oregon model.

Joel explained that this proposal is high up on Speaker Chopp's agenda. Rep. Kagi is interested in developing legislation. Although did not originate with WSA, we have been a part of the discussion. This is an opportunity for us to link Head Start and ECEAP together and create whatever quality improvements, efficiency and flexibility might be found. The idea is to create a more seamless system, increase public awareness of early education.

As we get invited into the process, we want to find a way to make this work for everyone. Things to keep in mind:

- We don't have to do exactly what Oregon did.
- It doesn't work without the money. Part of the idea is to improve services for children, and it can't be done without the money.
- This would still be a state Head Start program. Current ECEAP programs would remain in existence, money would be controlled at state level, monitoring would be by the state.
- Federal government would get involved through collaboration. What the state program looks like is up to the state.

In Oregon, the HS performance standards are adopted across the board, funded at the same level for HS and state HS, and joint monitoring for jointly-funded programs.

Most concerns have been around flexibility, and we can work to develop a system that works that in.

We have talked about phasing this in, including training, etc

### **Q and A**

*Is Ruth Kagi going to propose something this session?*

JR - Yes, and they are aware that we would not be interested if the funding is not included.

### ***Voluntary system?***

John Bancroft – *is there any possibility of making this voluntary for ECEAP programs if they remain at existing funding level?*

JR - We have to seriously look at that option. It could create efficiencies for dual-funded programs but give flexibility to others. Would be curious to see how that might work from a DEL perspective.

Wendy Roedell - *I don't want to see a two-tiered program, it could end up looking bad.*

JR - Part of benefit in Rep Chopp and Kagi's mind is that there would be one program, funded separately.

### **Name change**

John Naegele – *in Oregon, do they call it the Oregon pre-k program, or is it Oregon HS?*

JR -- They call it the Oregon Head Start Pre-K Program. The issue of the name might be discussed in the future, but it didn't get much traction at last week's meeting.

### **Length of Day**

Wendy Roedell – *The thing that is going to mess the most people up is length of day, it affects staff teaching double sessions, transportation, etc. Maybe give programs a couple of years to meet that standard. It would be impossible to implement that quickly.*

JR - We had a conversation with the Region X Office about Oregon. They said that they would work with programs that have had problems with the rigidity of the performance standards, and would probably be able to do waivers for certain performance standards, like transportation or hours, flexibility in remote areas, etc.

John Naegele – at Bethel, two 3.5 hour workdays worked, because you don't pay for lunch and you can have people at work 8.5 hours per day. Transportation is more challenging.

EPIC runs double 3.5 hour sessions too.

Janet Anderson – Another option is that there could be home-visits in conjunction with less than 3.5 hours of class time.

John Naegele – maybe with the waiver you could try to meet the total hours for the year rather than the hours per day.

That would help the programs that are blended with special Ed.

### **Transportation**

*What role does OSPI play in this, since they regulate transportation? For at least the ECEAP only programs, we could probably maintain the current rules.*

Right now OSPI regs only apply when SD bus systems provide transportation, not all ECEAP programs.

Sandy Nelson was speculating if there might be some flexibility in special ed regs to enable them to transport ECEAP kids.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring for state-funded only programs and for dually funded programs may be different. State would decide what to do with their own monitoring report, and state-funded only programs might have slightly different rules, since they don't need to worry about HS match.

### **Paperwork/Reporting**

Uby Creek – ECEAP doesn't seem to have as much paperwork, but still has high standards.

Joel commented that we would like to lift all boats – at the end of the day we're talking about quality for kids. We have two high-quality programs serving the same population. How can we help them work together more effectively?

*Reporting requirements – would it be similar, and under the same monitoring tool?*

JR - Our goal would be to have one reporting mechanism, so if you're dually funded, you'd just fill out one set of forms and send it to both the feds and state.

*Currently the state gathers more and different information, monthly reports, including who's in the program, etc. Would HS requirements be added on top?*

JR - HS has tons of reports, and state would have to decide what are the important things that would be required for reporting. You would be reporting the state funded kids as HS kids in the PIR.

Janet Heverling – She is uncomfortable with the speed that this is moving. It is difficult to evaluate what this will mean to an ECEAP-only program. She would urge a phased-in program. She has double sessions, state employees, and can't reduce hours. Concerned about additional paperwork.

JR - That's probably true for ECEAP-only programs, but the benefit would be that you would have more money for services. The goal would be to get the money up front, provide training and technical assistance, phase the program in, and provide flexibility for programs funded only by the state, especially for some of the more difficult performance standards like hours-per-day and transportation.

Dorlan Hergesheimer– there is less flexibility and more paperwork with Head Start, but kids are getting a more consistent level of service to children. For programs that run both programs, there will probably be less paperwork with this proposal. A higher standard is applied to Head Start. Once you get into it it's not formidable, but the transition will be difficult. The bottom line for him is that it would be better than trying to run two separate programs.

John Bancroft – some of what gets called HS paperwork can also be called individualized learning plan and high quality services.

Dee West – some of the paperwork is more self-created as we put in systems to meet requirements and high-quality services. We operate our HS and ECEAP the same except for length of day. All in all, we operate on the HS standards across the program. One of my concerns about keeping the same 2 programs system is how do we continue to grow as ECEAP stays the same level.

### **Enrollment**

*Enrollment for HS is full enrollment by day 1, and in ECEAP it's 30 days.*

JR - Reauthorization calls for 97% enrollment. Other thing that may be impacted with enrollment is that reauthorization raises eligibility for a certain number of kids to 130%, so that would be a change to who would be served.

### **Training during phase-in**

This is a huge system change for all programs, and a major part of this plan needs to be training and transition assistance to make sure programs are brought up to speed.

Wendy Roedell– Yes, it's a huge system change, and many programs run their ECEAP programs completely separately from Head start even if they are dually funded. If we treat it as a huge change process and look at all the elements involved, it would be better.

### **Subcontracting**

Mary Tatham – She thinks this is something that we should be able to work out. We subcontract out a portion of our ECEAP slots, and do the family support element.

*How will the subcontracting issues work out under Head Start rules?*

It may be a way to leverage higher quality in sub-contractors, subcontractors will have to decide whether they will meet the standards.

### **Joel's wrap-up**

If we do this, vendor rate will rise substantially, which will allow ECEAP programs to do a lot more.

We have an opportunity to shape what our services will look like in the future, which is a very rare opportunity. We can help guide the legislation so it works for our programs. We'll be talking about this again at the Directors Meeting this week, at our Board meeting, and all comments are invited.