

Executive Director's Report
October 21 - 22, 2015 Council Meeting

Budget

- The budget report with expenditures through August 2015 is included in the packet. The budget report closing out Fiscal Year 2015 (through June 30th) is also included.

Membership Update

- Mary Tarver was appointed by the Governor on September 25, 2015. Ms. Tarver is a parent representative from the Alexandria region and will complete the short unexpired term of Kay Marcel. Her name will be submitted to the Governor's Office for re-appointment for a full term.
- The Membership Committee will meet on October 14th to recommend candidates to the full Council during the business meeting to fill vacancies created by Terry McFillen's resignation and Sam Beech and Brenda Cosse's terms ending in November.

New Officer Orientation

The new Executive Committee was provided an orientation/training session to orient them to the Executive Committee and their new leadership roles on the Council.

Planning Ad Hoc Committee

The committee met for the second time in September to complete a draft of the Council's new five-year plan. This draft is included in the packet and will be up for consideration and vote at the Council meeting.

Professional Development

- Michelle Hurst and I attended the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) Annual Conference and the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) Technical Assistance (TA) Institute in Reno, Nevada. The focus of the TA Institute was an explanation of the new requirements for the Council's new five-year plan.
- The opportunity to meet personally with AIDD leadership resulted in the Council receiving a letter from AIDD clarifying that the Division of Administration's charge of \$49,790 to the Council for the services by the Office of State Procurement without justification was prohibited by the DD Act.

LaCAN/LaTEACH

- The Council's Annual Legislative Kick Off was held for our LaCAN/LaTEACH advocacy leaders as well as the Families Helping Families (FHF) Directors. Information was shared and discussed on the state-of-the-state in home and community based services and education. The participants made recommendations for the Council's legislative advocacy agenda and discussed plans for upcoming roundtables, legislative visits and the Disability Rights Day.
- Training was held separately for the LaCAN and LaTEACH Leaders to share information and provide guidance to build overall knowledge base, capacity and effectiveness.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

Community Supports

- Advocated/discussed the following issues in the Council's quarterly meeting with Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) Secretary Kathy Kliebert (verbally reported at the July Council meeting):

- The filling of waiver slots for which funding was appropriated in the 2015 legislative session: Secretary Kliebert reported the slots are being filled according to a phase-in plan.
- The status of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Managed Long Term Supports and Services (MLTSS) for the populations served by the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) and the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD): Secretary Kliebert reported the future of the RFP for OAAS is uncertain; the RFP for OCDD is moving forward. (This has subsequently changed. DHH will not be pursuing MLTSS under the current administration.)
- Use of Act 378 funds and Act 378 policy issues: Secretary Kliebert agreed to put the allowable use of funds into administrative rule. OCDD will monitor the use of funds when they conduct annual monitoring of the Local Governing Entities (LGEs). Deputy Secretary Hugh Eley will follow up with the Office of Behavioral Health regarding their progress on the Act 378 Policy and Procedures Manual and the performance indicators for the Accountability Implementation Plan.
- Moving the \$500,000 appropriated for EarlySteps (as a result of the Council's advocacy) to Individual and Family Support: Secretary Kliebert supports this move but needs legislative support to do it. The Council agreed to seek legislative support.
- Residential Options Waiver (ROW): DHH recently implemented an enhanced rate for people with high cost needs in ICFs/DD. DHH hopes to add an enhanced rate to the ROW later this year.
- Submitted comments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on its proposed rule regarding Medicaid Managed Care.
- Provided a letter of support for Children's Special Health Services' application to the Center for Disease Control's grant announcement "Population-Based Surveillance of Birth Defects and Data Utilization for Public Health Action."

Education

- Provided information related to the lack of parental input into policies and LA Department of Education (LDOE) practices pertaining to students with disabilities to the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP).
- Provided information related to allocation of funding to charter schools to the Board of Secondary and Elementary Education (BESE) and to the Superintendents' Advisory Council. Beginning in 2015 funding allocations to charter schools are based on weighted student counts for the state share of funds in the Minimum Foundation Program; however, local funds continue to be allocated on a per student basis, regardless of student characteristic. LDOE has not demonstrated under what legal authority it is basing its interpretation and implementation of using the current funding allocations of local dollars to charter schools.
- Provided information to BESE on the requirement for charter schools to serve a fair share of students with disabilities. Although Act 467 requires charter school pupil memberships to have equal to not less than 85 percent of the percentage of students with disabilities enrolled in local public schools, BESE did not adjust the charter school compact to require they meet this legal requirement.
- Provided information to SEAP on the flawed indicators of success (i.e., graduation rate, dropout rate, and performance on standardized assessments) to determine whether students with disabilities are being served appropriately and recommended SEAP not accept the LDOE report on LEA determinations. Specifically, it was shared how these indicators reflect selectivity of students within schools and incentivize schools, particularly charter schools, to not serve students with disabilities, particularly those with more significant disabilities. SEAP accepted the LDOE report for LEA determinations without objection.
- Sent a letter to Superintendent John White with the Council's recommendations to issue guidance for Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams to begin including expectations of

employment while students are in elementary school and enhance support to IEP teams focused on effective approaches to increasing work-based opportunities during high school.

Employment

- Advocated for the LA Workforce Commission (LWC) to directly include individuals with DD and family members in their discussions/stakeholder groups regarding the planning and implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA).
- Advocated for the LWC to ensure implementation of WIOA in Louisiana includes an integrated system of intake and service provision that braids funding streams.

General

- Successfully advocated with the Division of Administration to reduce the amount the Council will have to pay for services from the newly created Office of State Procurement from \$49,780 to \$9,108.
- Developed a [fact sheet](#) for people to share with legislative candidates to provide information on issues important to people with developmental disabilities in the areas of community supports, education and employment – and to introduce the Council and our grassroots advocacy networks. This is posted on the Council's website.
- Provided information to the LA Partnership for Children and Families on the needs of children with developmental disabilities for a "[Platform for Children](#)" they developed for candidates and voters that covers eight major policy areas. There is also an [Executive Summary](#). Both of these are posted on the Council's website.
- Developed and sent two success stories to AIDD (per their request) for them to use in highlighting the work of Councils. These are also posted on our website [here](#) and [here](#).
- Provided information through LaDDC News and Facebook on voting accommodations and candidate surveys, changes to behavioral health services, the Council's Advocacy Leadership Conference, support coordinators attending IEP meetings, community inclusion and the ADA, the impact of the legislative session on people with DD and their families, the Council's FFY2016 Plan activities, the LDOE's decision to count diplomas earned by students with disabilities in the school accountability system, and the recruitment of applicants for Council membership and Partners in Policymaking.
- Provided interview for TV news story on the needs of people with developmental disabilities on the waiting list.

Collaborative Efforts

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Advisory Council

- The Council has long advocated for a higher Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) rate for children with disabilities. The LDOE's proposed improvements to Early Childhood include increasing the CCAP rate and eliminating or reducing parent co-pays for low-income families. The proposal references "a differential rate based on age and special needs" and that LDOE still needs "to determine how to best support children with special needs."
- LDOE staff are meeting monthly with EarlySteps Program Manager Brenda Sharp and Early Intervention Specialist Toni Ledet. They expect to complete the task of changing the CCAP payments for children with disabilities by February 2016.
- Advocated for data to be provided by the Goldman School to support policy and rate decisions on supporting children with disabilities in inclusive settings. The Goldman School has a long history of serving infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers with disabilities in a fully inclusive setting.

OCDD Mortality Review Committee

- Of the 53 cases reviewed this quarter, the committee reviewed four cases with Health Standards which it will now investigate for possible abuse/neglect.
- The committee requested additional information on five cases and recommended training for the support coordinator and/or direct support provider.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC)

The LRC approved committee recommendations to:

- create a standing committee on transition and
- request the LRS Director consider specific components for inclusion in the system for quality monitoring and enhancement of supported employment providers

Professional Development Committee of the State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)

- The committee determined the definition of professional development for recommendations to SICC on a new tiered professional development system. The committee also decided to use the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) policy blueprint as a guide to continue developing the professional development framework document.
- Advocated that this document include that tiered technical assistance reference training with specific strategies to support children with severe disabilities. Currently it does include the statement, "Planning and collaboration among Institutions of Higher Education, as well as with EarlySteps staff, should be a priority to ensure that an adequate number of trained early intervention providers from various educational backgrounds are hired to address the unique needs of infants/toddlers with disabilities and their families."

Meetings Attended (by Executive Director) Since June 26, 2015

Meeting with Sec. Kliebert, Hugh Eley, Mark Thomas, Sam Beech, Michelle Hurst – June 29

Planning Ad Hoc Committee – June 30

Council meeting – July 15-16

NACDD Annual Conference – July 20-21

AIDD Technical Assistance Institute – July 22-23

Membership Committee – July 29

Presentation on the Council and DD services to the LaSPDG Family Facilitators– August 4

AARP Gubernatorial Candidate Forum – August 6

Presentation on the Council to the Children's Cabinet Advisory Council – August 11

DD Network Collaboration meeting – August 12

WIOA stakeholders meeting – August 14

LaCAN Leaders Annual Training – August 19

Advocacy Leadership Conference Planning meeting with speakers – August 20

Staff Retreat – August 26

Planning Ad Hoc Committee – September 1

New Officer Orientation – September 15

2016 Legislative Kick-off – September 16