Minutes of Early Intervention Planning Council  
Wednesday March 14, 2007

Members Present  
Rhonda Allen Allen  
Judge Marilyn Moores  
Dr. Barbara Gillenwaters  
John Brandon  
Patricia Jones  
Kent Burrow  
John Kennedy  
Lonnell Conley  
Brant Ping  
Christina Ball

Members not present  
Marilyn Pfisterer

IUPUI Staff present  
Eric Wright  
Laura Littlepage

Meeting was convened at 8:10 a.m. the minutes were approved without changes.

Eric Wright- I met with the City-County Council about the draft plan and our progress. They agreed that we are not ready to move forward with the plan, that there are fiscal issues that need to be resolved first. There are three measures they would like for us to focus on:

- Spend more time analyzing the data on how the dollars are flowing in and out of the system. We have drafted proposed Phase II questions and are using these to focus out work. Our goal is to get something into the next budget cycle, by July 1 or August 1 at the latest.
- The multi-level structural issues. Community based organizations (CBOs) are the front line of prevention. How do we organize them to be more effective partners?
- Establishment of a new agency or delegation to an existing agency the function of care coordination, case management for early intervention. If a parent or teacher has a child they would like to get help, somewhere to turn to for services before they get in the Juvenile Justice (JJ) or Department of Child Services (DCS) system.

Kent Burrow- for histories sake, in 1997 state legislation authorized Early Intervention Planning Councils (EIPC) in every county. State statute defines programs and funding sources- shall review. The City-county council adopted much of the same language. My concerns are that we are following directions of the ordinance. We need to provide a review of those funding sources.

Eric Wright- that is number four on the question list. Several graduate students and Drew Klacik are working on it. We want to make sure we are clear at every point of the funding stream. Most of these are focused on the down stream problem, kids already into system. In addition to
focusing on what is happening there, we need to focus on what can keep them from entering the system. We can’t reduce the fiscal burden if can’t keep them out of the system. How much of these dollars can be redirected to early intervention prevention programs? Part of the problem is a lack of coordination of CBOs to go after this funding. The mere fact that this group exists, helps players meet, but there is not a comparable system to bring CBOs together.

John Kennedy- if you start downstream and working your way up, then you should look at the crisis intervention piece. Once kids get past early intervention but before they get into systems. That group has met twice now. That might be a group that could inform early intervention. It is not a fiscal agent, agreement of processes if kids come up to the system doors. It is called the Youth Crisis Response Task Force. Where are the kids in crisis going and is anything being done to prevent them to go further into system? It is the next step upstream.

Rhonda Allen- statutorily we are bound to provide our funding in a reactionary way, after kids get in trouble. DCS state-wide has been asked to be everything to everyone. Only a very small portion of the budget- $1.8 million, is directed to prevention. I am not quite sure how we shift money in DCS budget to pay for prevention. Maybe by looking at other funding sources we may find something. I am open to ideas on how to fund this.

Eric Wright- Each of the funding streams has restrictions- there is not much wiggle room. Shortfalls and windfalls are reactive to what DCS had to do. Question is what can we do to maximize funds elsewhere? Where else can we find money in budget to fund upstream?

Lonnell Conley- if you could zero in how to fund it. This would help us out tremendously and provide a vision.

Eric Wright- by next meeting will have legalities and constraints of each of the funding streams, so when we get to the figures we will know what latitude we have

Lonnell Conley- Kent, what step should we do next?

Kent Burrow- for example, it has been mentioned that some services for kids are eligible for Medicaid reimbursement but haven’t been. What additional services could we possibly fund another way? Dr. Wright and his grad students- important to understand are there services we’re not maximizing.

Lonnell Conley- let’s go to work.

Rhonda Allen- an additional comment on item 4. What is the practicality of parents involved in systems repaying a certain amount back for what has been expended? What percent is fair? Some families can’t, some can. Some counties up north have been doing this. It is a nice accountability for parents. Parents are responsible for their kids. Add it to number 4 as a potential source for revenue.
John Brandon - traditionally prevention dollars have come from private, philanthropic sector. It is important to focus on the cost savings on fiscal side of these investments. Gathering that evidence has uses.

Eric Wright- we don’t have that listed.

John Brandon- I could get my hands on a report on it this week

Eric Wright- other additions to the list?

Brant Ping- what about the addition of mental health systems in I.b. along with education system?

Eric Wright- that is appropriate, we are going to flesh this out, all the systems, DCS JJ and nonprofit as well as education and mental health.

Eric Wright- in thinking about timeline of a draft plan, how could we put an organizational structure in place? From a feasibility point of view, we need to t together something for the 2008 budget by mid-year because of the nature of the complexity of the budget.

Brant Ping- when we look at the flow of money it will be important to know how that entity fits into that stream.

John Kennedy- if there is not a lot of cost attached to that new entity, then we should work simultaneously to get it started.

Eric Wright- there has been confusion about upstream and downstream. The original entity was much more comprehensive. If we can put in place some structure to begin organizing the nonprofit providers and help them better access philanthropic and federal dollars. Most nonprofits say they can use some help. There is not an organized office to access these dollars. The original idea was to find some kind of structure and we are currently looking at McCoy expanding to provide more planning and development work. When McCoy comes to this table, could represent the nonprofit more broadly. There are hundreds of these organizations.

John Brandon - we all tend to operate in our little areas (silos), big concrete with no doors or windows. These nonprofit providers want to know how can support work of other systems- they are often working with the same families. Sometimes a family has more than one child. How can we keep the others out of the system?

Lonnell Conley- how do we begin dialogues with these other agencies?

John Brandon- has to be somebody who is given this authority. We are charging this entity and expect them to report back progress they are making. Lots of small organizations. Coordinating agency group agencies together make it more likely to get philanthropic and governmental dollars.
Eric Wright- one of the things is developing a plan for an agency and a budget. That is a thing we could put in place- we see this as a low hanging fruit, that won’t cost a lot of money. That’s not something that is easily funded by these funding sources- they are service specific- this is infrastructure. Right now discussion of after-school programs. There is spotty coverage of after school programs. Research shows that they are one of the most effective ways to keep kids out of trouble. Expanding the dialogue needs a group to take that role. Put the prevention in the community. Right now it is hard for DCS to invest in prevention- it is outside their mission and historically we have relied on nonprofits to provide this service. We need to bolster that piece of the system.

John Kennedy- we are back to looking at number one as a priority. I recommend we keep it that way.

Eric Wright- we can do this in incremental steps. First, put something in place to initiate the conversation and then look at it again and see if we expand this function. We can build on McCoy, an already existing agency, and expand their functions to focus on prevention even more. We could have that by next month.

Patricia Jones- we should try to build consensus on this.

Eric Wright- we will come back with a budget and plan. Instead of a complete plan, roll out in pieces. Have something to City-County council by July 1.

Patricia Jones- It is just that we have great attendance today.

Rhonda Allen- we have no mental health representative on this Council since Rita resigned.

Lonnell Conley- I am definitely looking into this and we should have someone before the next meeting.

Rhonda Allen- Medicaid reimbursement to providers for children’s behavioral services may be cut soon, if a bill in the legislature is passed. While it is a good idea to expand school-based services with this funding, if reimbursement to providers is being cut then the funds won’t be available.

Eric Wright- should the council make a motion to this effect?

Rhonda Allen- it is worthy to take a stand. If Medicaid cuts reimbursement it will make it harder to serve children.

John Kennedy - I move that reimbursement for children’s behavioral health services not be cut.

John Brandon- Ask the City-County council to strongly recommend to Marion County legislators to take a lead in not cutting the funds.

Eric Wright- we can phrase something and bring it to the City-County council.
Rhonda Allen- all in favor of what Eric Wright said, say aye. All ayes.

Eric Wright- now we have to take it to the City-County Council.

Lonnell Conley- consider it done.

Eric Wright- for the next meeting we will have a review of funding sources, structure and statutory issues and pull number together for following meeting. City-county council would like to have a phone number for families to call for help. We need to think about that as part of the plan. It will be a significant expansion of services.

Rhonda Allen- other business?

Kent Burrow- please explain your new role and your new title.

Rhonda Allen- Dan Carmin retired into another career. As a week and half ago, I was appointed Director of Marion County Child Services.

Eric Wright- we need a vice-chair since Rhonda Allen is now chair.

Rhonda Allen- we don’t have a deputy director.

Patricia Jones- I nominate John Brandon. Everyone agreed.

Kent Burrow- Judge Moores I know there are other legislative issues.

Judge Moores- Senate Bill 328 has many provisions, some good. It streamlines FBI checks so kids can be placed with relatives, it creates citizen review panels, but it also has a provision that does away with Early Intervention Planning Councils and gave that function to Regional Planning Councils. Marion and Lake County are considered their own region. It makes sense in other counties that don’t have the resources. I met with Director Payne and proposed an amendment that would exempt Marion County. The other counties would move to that, but we would keep our EIPC. Kouzma had an amendment that would keep all the EIPCs. Rep. Sommers offered Kouzma’s amendment, not our amendment. Every legislator knows Marion County wants their EIPC and will fight for it. The bill will now go to conference committee. We will all be here and the work will not have been for naught. I am very aware of the council’s support.

Rhonda Allen- to clarify- in many other counties, early intervention has been defunct, and that function has fallen on DCS. The regional councils are internal structures to DCS. It would make what is currently happening formal.

Judge Moores- regional service councils better serve the needs of other counties. This EIPC will remain.
Eric Wright- Next meeting date is Wednesday May 9 at 8:00 a.m. in this room.

Rhonda Allen - We are officially adjourned.