Early Intervention Advisory Council Meeting
May 7, 2025
Lucas Room, State Library of Ohio, Columbus, Ohio

I. Call to order
Taylor Hammond called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

II. Role Call: Trish Barnett, *Jody Beall, *Carrie Beier, Brielle Clark, Cindy Davis, Maggie Gons, *Kathy Greenwalt-Cherry, *Pam Hamer, Erin Hale, Taylor Hammond, Arley Hammons, *Johni Hayes, Jackalyn Jones, Erin Lucas, Mandy Marcum, Karen Mintzer, Anni Monks, *Jennifer Ottley, *Jenni Remeis, Katelyn Rush, Shelly Palumbo,*Jamie Sanders, Beth Schearing,

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting
Hammond opened the meeting by making a motion to approve the February Advisory Council meeting minutes. February meeting minutes were approved.

IV. Open Issues

a) DCY Updates

FFY23 APR: Hammond provided a brief overview of the day's agenda and started off by presenting department updates, starting with the FFY23 APR. It was submitted prior to the February 3 deadline and clarification period occurred in April. Only one minor clarification was needed around accessibility of a document. State determinations are expected to be issued in June.

FFY25 Part C Application: Hammond also provided an update on the Part C application. She informed the group that it was posted until May 20th and public comment was accepted through April 20. No comments were received. She anticipates the Federal award will be coming soon and funding is expected to remain the same as previous years.

OSEP DMS Visit: Hammond also provided an update on the upcoming DMS site visit to Ohio. Currently, Ohio's engagement is scheduled to begin May 2026 and the onsite visit is scheduled for Oct 2026.

EI Team Structure and New Hires at DCY: Hammond then reviewed the EI team structure at DCY, identifying open positions and where each team member is within DCY. She also announced the hiring of a new EI Program Consultant, Corey St. Myers, a DS from Hancock County and a new data manager was also hired, Brier Gallihugh. Both Cory and Brier have started their positions and begun the onboarding process. The team is working to fill the vacant monitoring position and hope to make an offer soon. Hammond also covered some of the other vacancies, including the EI Resource Coordinator Position, as well as the EI fiscal consultant position.

EIDS Modernization: Hammond next provided an update on the EIDS modernization process, which involves moving the EI Data System from DODD to DCY. The change is scheduled to go live on the evening of May 29th (likely around 4-5pm). Minimal downtime is expected and no changes are expected to the application or any data entry. There will be very minor changes to login process (users should be able to maintain current username and password). Hammond let everyone know that the EIDS message box will be used to communicate real time updates/changes.

2025 EI Family Questionnaire: Hammond then discussed the upcoming SFY25 Family Questionnaire. Questionnaires are planned to be distributed in the coming weeks. The same questionnaire will be used and the process will remain the same as in past years. The questionnaire will be sent to families who had a child enrolled in EI on March 1. The vast majority of questionnaires will be distributed via email; however, questionnaires will be distributed using USPS mail if there was no email listed for the parent/caregiver in EIDS, the email was invalid, or the primary language was identified as anything other than English or Spanish. Counties will receive a list of families in their county who will be receiving a questionnaire, as well as the QR codes and links. DCY will be collecting responses through June 30.

EI Virtual Requirements Memo: Hammond next summarized the EI Virtual Requirements Memo that DCY recently distributed and provided an opportunity to discuss and ask questions. The memo detailed the requirements for completing EI requirements virtually. Going forward, evaluations may not be completed virtually as most of the scores are not valid if completed in this manner. All evaluations must be completed with at least one evaluator in person. The same is true for assessments, however, there is an exception if 1) the publisher of the tool allows for virtual administration, and 2) family circumstances warrant virtual administration. There were no questions. Hammond also reviewed the requirements for completing initial and annual IFSPs. Both the EISC and parent must be physically present at initial and annual IFSPs. There is an exception that the EISC and parent can participate via video call to meet the "physical present" requirement if that is determined to be the best method based on family circumstances. It is expected that EISCs will document the circumstances within case notes. The main takeaway is that DCY is trying to offer as much flexibility as possible while remaining in compliance with federal requirements.

SFY26 EI Grants: Hammond then provided the group with information about the EI grants. In the EISC grant allocation, the state is retaining the additional $2 million included in last year's allocation. Additionally, DCY expects an additional $7 million earmark for CBDD for E&A and SC. This is not final and there is still potential this could be cut from the budget. If the additional funding is received, it must first be offered to the CBDD for Evaluation & Assessment. If the CBDD accepts the funding, they are agreeing to uphold Maintenance of Effort (MOE). If the EISC agency is not the CBDD, the EISC agency and CBDD must enter into a formal agreement detailing the use of the funds. If the CBDD does not accept the

funds, the EISC agency may retain the funding and use it to support the delivery of evaluations, assessment, and service coordination.

Hammond also explained that allocations will be determined using the same process as previous years. Communication regarding EISC grant agreements will be sent to county contacts and also disseminated via the DCY Tuesday Times.

EI Data: Hammond then reviewed monthly EI referrals count. She explained that referral numbers are starting to even out and some areas are seeing a slight decrease. She indicated that we will have more information once we have final counts from May and June, and will be able to see the entire annual counts in comparison to previous years. We are seeing that more referrals are being determined eligible and moving on to IFSP development. This could be due to recent Sparkler App and outreach to referral sources.

EISC Grant Changes: Shelly Palumbo then went over some changes to expect with EISC grant. She informed the group that grants will be in the DCY system, but counties will still use GMS for invoicing in SFY26.

Program Consultant Map: Palumbo explained that the Program Consultant map will be changing with the addition of the new consultant, Cory. The goal is to ensure the consultants are not traveling all across the state to get to one county and to keep them within two hours of their home location. Cory is currently onboarding and that is a timely process (typically one year). She indicated that we do not expect his onboarding to take a year, but it will be a couple of months. During that time, he will be shadowing the other consultants and learning processes before taking on counties. The goal is to ensure they are equipped and ready.

Assessment Focus: Palumbo also discussed the need to address assessment at a state level. She indicated that the state team is seeing some issues with the way the IFSP process is being conducted. The state team will be assessing needs and doing targeted follow up, which may include sending out a Monitoring Consultant with the Program Consultant, and possibly including the Fiscal consultant.

Principles of Service Coordination Modules: Palumbo reminded the group that DCY has been in the process of revising Principles of Service Coordination (POSC) Modules to align with new rules. She indicated that Modules 1 & 2 & 6 are available. She explained that the content for Modules 5 and 7 is complete, that the EI team is currently reviewing the modules, and that they will be available very soon. Palumbo also explained that Module 3 needed more work and will likely be the last module to be posted. She indicated that programs have been relying heavily on COGS and this is a focus that we are working to address through Module 3. She indicated that test out exams and being updated, but they will still be available as an option. Palumbo also provided an update that the IFSP guidance document is also in the process of being updated.

Training Participation : Anni Monks then presented EI Professional Development Updates for March and April, including providing numbers of participants in webinars and trainings:

- Developmental Specialist Application Walkthrough Webinar - 137 attendees
- 45-Day Baseline Webinar - 91 attendees
- Motivational Interviewing - 37 attendees
- Battelle Developmental Inventory - 12 attendees

EISC Credential Extension: Monks informed the group that EISC credentials have been extended by six months to ensure EISCs have time to complete the POSC modules. This was communicated in DCY memo 25-028. She indicated that no credentials will expire prior to December of this year.

Developmental Specialist Certification Updates: Monks next provided updates regarding the DS certification transition to OCCRRA, which occurred on March 3. OCCRRA is now processing all DS certifications. Since March, ten five-year credentials have been issued and thirteen one year credentials have been issued. Monks informed the group that she is dedicating time to assist the field throughout this transition. She indicated that resources are available on the EI website and can be found on the DS landing page, including webinar recordings and user guides.

There were a few questions about trainings offered via OCCRRA and whether EISCs could apply to receive credit. Monks explained that there is always the option submit a request if someone feels like a course applies to EI and should count. There was discussion around Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) trainings that are available. The group also discussed issues with getting trainings approved, indicating that it is very time consuming to get everything right in order to be approved, as many times multiple submissions are required. The group also discussed that for Home Visiting, any is any Ohio Approved training in OCCRRA is approved, but for EI, the training must cover birth to three to be approved.

V) DS Certification Rule Overview

Monks informed the group that the Developmental Specialist Certification rule is due for five-year review July 1, 2026. She indicated that the department will begin collecting stakeholder feedback very soon to determine what is working well with the current rule and what may need to be revised.

Anni then provided a brief overview of the current DS rule and credentialing requirements. She explained that Section A covers the purpose of the Rule, which is to establish minimum standards/requirements. Section B provides definitions. Section C breaks down the two levels of certification, which are one-year and five-year credentials. She explained that for the one-year there are two tracks and for 5-year there are three tracks.

Monks briefly went over one-year DS credential and explained that Track 1 is no longer used, as there are no more individuals holding one-year certification issued prior to July 1, 2021. She also reviewed the requirements of Track 2.

Monks then reviewed the Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) Coaching requirement, including the requirements that must be completed within the first year and the second year. Next, Anni provided an overview of the five-year DS tracks and the requirements involved in each trac. She explained that Track 2 is the most commonly used, which is for applicants with related degree and experience. and that Track III is for providers credentialed in another state.

Monks then explained Sections D, E, F, and G. Section D covers annual training requirements. Section E outlines certifications that were issued under previous rule. Section F is an administrative review process for applications that have been disapproved. Section G covers denial, suspension, or revocation of credentials.

The issue was raised that many higher education are revising course content and many are removing the birth to three content. This should be considered with new rule requiring syllabi be submitted to verify that courses pertain to birth to three.

VI. Communication and Data Collection Methods Activity
Hammond explained that the group would participate in an activity around communication and data collection methods. The attendees broke into small groups to discuss the questions below, and each group did a report out at the end:
- What types of communications (e.g., EI program updates, webinars, memos, emails, trainings, guidance, etc.) are currently working well? What is working well about the types of communications you are currently receiving?
- What types of communications (e.g., EI program updates, webinars, memos, emails, trainings, guidance) are currently not working well? How could the current types of communications you are receiving be improved?
- What types of data collections (e.g., Survey Monkey, Microsoft forms, individual Excel sheets or Microsoft forms) are currently working well? What is working well with the types of data collection we currently utilize?
- What types of data collection methods (e.g., Survey Monkey, Microsoft forms, individual Excel sheets or Microsoft forms)are currently not working well? What could be improved with the types of data collection methods we currently utilize?