

Early Intervention Advisory Council Meeting
November 7, 2024
Boardroom Conference Room, State of Ohio Library, Columbus, Ohio

Attendance: Julie Brem, Elisha Cangelosi, Cindy Davis, Erica Goodburn, Kathy Greenwalt-Cherry, Pam Hamer, Johni Hayes, Bonnie Hubbard-Nicosia, Maggie Gons, Lauren Keller, Karen Mintzer, Jenni Remis, Jamie Sanders, Beth Schearing, Erin Simmons, and Allyson Vanhorn

Department updates with Nathan DeDino

DeDino began department updates with a discussion of key EI data points. He shared information about the EI program referrals and point-in-time child counts. He explained that referral data appeared to be plateauing compared to the same time last year, while the child counts peaked in July and began a slight and unsteady decline. He said it is too early to tell whether this is a trend, and child counts remain at very high levels compared to prior years.

DeDino discussed that Ohio's application for federal Part C IDEA funding had been accepted and reminded the group that this application officially changed the lead agency from DODD to DCY. He informed the group that the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) had contacted Ohio to schedule a kick-off meeting for OSEP's monitoring efforts. DeDino told the group that EI forms had been translated into several different languages and were on the EI website. Finally, DeDino informed the group that, with the change in lead agency complete, he was stepping away from his role as Part C Coordinator and Taylor Hammond, who has been the EI program's long serving data manager, had assumed the role of Part C Coordinator.

Shelly Palumbo then provided updates regarding professional development and technical assistance efforts. She discussed updates to the Principles of Service Coordination and eligibility basics courses and shared recent training attendance numbers. In the technical assistance space, she informed the group that county technical assistance and training plans would be updated by November 30 and consultants were focusing on assessment practices.

SFY24 Data Review and Annual Performance Report (APR) Overview

Taylor Hammond then provided an overview of the SFY24 EI data and the SFY25/FFY24 APR that must be submitted to OSEP by February 3, 2025. The EI data review included detailed information about EI referrals, child counts, child age, exit reasons, and length of stay. Hammond took questions from the group. She also walked through the APR. The APR covers the state's performance around ten performance and compliance indicators. Hammond explained how the current year's data compared to past data and relevant targets and took questions from the group. Upon completion of the APR overview, the appointed members of council took a voice vote to use the APR as their annual report.

Central Intake Update

Karen Mintzer from Bright Beginnings then provided an overview of SFY24 central intake activities. She discussed various public awareness campaigns and EI outreach efforts. Mintzer spent the bulk of her presentation discussing online screening efforts Bright Beginnings was implementing, including sharing recent data. The launch of the Sparkler app in mid-September 2024 has resulted in a considerable uptick in completed online screenings.

Discussion Activity

The large group then broke into smaller groups to discuss family engagement strategies. Each group discussed the following questions:

- How do you work with the family (or for families, how does the practitioner work with you/how would you like the practitioner to work with you) to create outcomes or goals and develop IFSPs?
- How you promote (or for families, how does the practitioner promote or how would you like the practitioner to promote) family confidence and competence?
- How do you engage families in the EI process (or for families, how are you or how would you like to be engaged in the EI process) to ensure family priorities and concerns are addressed?
- How do you engage families in the EI process (or for families, how are you or how would you like to be engaged in the EI process) to ensure activities are flexible, individualized, and tailored to the family's preferences?

After the small group discussion, there was a report out.

DeDino adjourned the meeting and let the group know that Hammond would be sending out 2025 meeting dates in the coming weeks.