

Spark NH
Evaluation Committee Meeting
10/19/11

Participants: Peter Antal, Debra Nelson, Melanie Currier, Jessica Locke, Kathy Keene, Laura Milliken
Unable to Attend: Dee Dunn, Karen Horsch

I. Overview

- Members described their hopes for the committee
- Reviewed goal of committee: to evaluate outcomes and processes of Administration for Children and Families (ACF) grant; work with other committees on designing plan to evaluate outcomes for children and families. Although will work with all committees, focus will be on Needs Assessment and Data Systems committees
- Reviewed committee guidelines. Note that each committee includes/will address multiple components/topics (content areas)
- Outlined communication strategies among workgroup chairs and leadership
- Reviewed Consensus Building model
- Reviewed role of committee: brainstorming/reviewing measures (how can we assess measures?); monitoring/reflecting on information we receive from Council and committees; assisting with coordination (especially Needs Assessment and Data System); set up evaluation process; reporting
- Committee is subject to Right to Know law: No meetings by email unless posted in advance and open to the public

II. Approach to Evaluation

- Focus of the group is on: strengthening, improving, accountability
- We will be working across a range of issues and content areas
- We will be adopting Meta vs. Micro level approaches: Targeting goals, activities, and connections
- In practice, members do not need a specific background in research/evaluation, but should come prepared to offer their perspectives and assist in brainstorming, reflection, assisting w/ coordination, and critical thought
- The capacities of the group are both expansive (many many volunteers) and limited (constrained staff resources). Our task will be to brainstorm broadly and then to think critically how to realistically achieve tasks with current resources or identify additional resources in order to make things happen.
- In general, Peter's role will be one of evaluation consultant. He will be available to provide suggestions on how the group can best tackle the various challenges ahead of them. Part of Peter's responsibility each year will be to produce an evaluation report on the initiative's accomplishments and the extent to which participant defined objectives and outcomes have been met. Multiple groups (particularly the evaluation, steering, and planning committee) will have input into this report, while Peter will retain oversight and determine the final material that will be included in the report.

III. Workplan Review

- Convening the task force

- In addition to current membership, committee should include representation from Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), an intern, and families. We currently have representation from: early childhood (child care, Head Start), higher ed, health insurance/Medicaid, research/eval. To round this out for specific tasks, we should anticipate collecting feedback across a broader group when needed, e.g., focus groups, invitation to specific meetings, invitation to review, visiting a committee, having a committee send a delegate, possibility of incorporating into a blog.

IV. Standards for Agendas and Minutes Across All Committees

- Discussed recommended content for agendas and meeting minutes:

Agendas:

- Review of action items from last meeting
- Major/relevant updates from other committees
- Requests from Council/other committees
- Requests to Council/other committees
- Next steps
- Meeting evaluation

Minutes:

- Group Name
- Meeting Date
- Participants, missing participants
- Review of action items from last meeting
- List of major agenda items
- Major/relevant updates from other committees
- Requests from other committees/Council
- Brief summary of accomplishments / decisions made
- Requests to other committees/Council
- Action Items / Who is Responsible / Due Dates
- Meeting evaluation: Recommended verbal evaluation after each meeting; written evaluation quarterly. Both to include:
 - Were people's voices heard?
 - Was it worth participant time?
 - What didn't work well?
 - What worked well?

V. Next Steps

- Melanie to consider chairing the Evaluation Committee in the future
- Laura/Debra to schedule next 3 meetings on meeting wizard, revisit meeting frequency

VI. Wrap Up / Review

- How'd it go – what worked / what didn't
 - Overall, participants felt this was an effective meeting and worth their time to participate

ACTION ITEMS

All

- Share copies of relevant evaluation tools with other committee members for review; review tools shared by other members

Laura

- Update committee guidelines re: process
 - Include in guidelines: Coordinate research/collection of information with the Evaluation Committee, which will provide feedback on methods and coordinate such efforts across committees.
- Update committee descriptions
- Invite additional members: CCR & R, intern opportunity, family representation
- Schedule next 3 meetings on meeting wizard; meeting frequency will be revisited in six months
- Send group the Inaugural Meeting evaluation summary

Debra

- Send Peter and all a copy of University of Denver's collaboration evaluation tool (Darrin Hicks), Evaluation Committee to review for possible incorporation into annual stakeholder survey
- Send policy and other questions for states to group

Peter

- Invite Melissa Wells from UNH Sociology Dept
- Create brief (about one page) summary sheet of data elements, sources, timeline
- Send notes on Needs Assessment topics to Needs Assessment Workgroup and Evaluation Committee

Melanie

- Melanie to consider chairing the Evaluation Committee in the future