

Alabama Interagency Autism Coordinating Council (AIACC)

Monday, April 14, 2014

Alabama Industrial Development Training Center

The AIACC met on Monday, April 14th, 2014, at the Alabama Industrial Development Training Center. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Cam Ward. Also in attendance were Co-Chairperson Bama Folsom Hager and Council members: Karen Amos, Fred Biasini, Greg Carlson, Jerimie Goike, Joshua Heard, Doris Hill, Elmyra Jones, Mitchell Lord, Sarah Ryan, Hanes Swingle, Kathy Welch, and ex-officio member and State Autism Coordinator, Anna McConnell. The following proxies were in attendance as well: Russell Green on behalf of Stephanie Azar, Tina Sanders on behalf of Thomas Bice, Kim Hill on behalf of Cary Boswell, Erin Wofford on behalf of Nancy Buckner, Christy Atkinson on behalf of John Mascia, Steve Lafreniere on behalf of Jim Reddoch, and Dawn Ellis on behalf of Don Williamson.

Minutes from the January 13, 2014 meeting were approved and adopted.

Dr. Martha Wingate shared a brief overview of the Alabama Autism Surveillance Project (AASP) led by the UAB AASP Team, in partnership with the Autism Society of Alabama. New data has been released from the CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network that now shows 1 in 68 children were identified with autism spectrum disorder. More detailed information may be found on the CDC's website:
<http://www.cdc.gov/features/dsautismdata/index.html>.

Following Dr. Wingate's presentation, Greg Carlson raised the questions of how the AIACC can use the information provided to look at policies and infrastructure in Alabama, and why is there a different prevalence rate here than in other states? (Currently Alabama is 1 in 175, while the average is 1 in 68). Upon Mr. Carlson's recommendation, Dr. Wingate agreed to return to the July meeting with some specific data related to the questions that were raised. Dr. Wingate mentioned UAB's work with the AIACC strategic plan and the upcoming satellite broadcast. The Council is inviting Dr. Jane Charles from South Carolina to speak about policy changes and similarities to Alabama. Dr. Wingate has been told by a number of colleagues that Alabama and South Carolina are similar.

Dr. Biasini also commented on the stats. He referenced pediatricians' responses to the increase; no matter the cause/reason for the increase, it means that neurodevelopmental issues are being identified and should be addressed.

Senator Ward spoke briefly regarding legislation and budget matters. The bill to establish the Alabama Behavior Analyst Licensing Board has passed. Paige McKerchar of Jacksonville State University, who is the current Executive Director of the Alabama Association for Behavior Analysis, shared some specifics on the licensing requirements and procedure. Mr. Lafreniere suggested that names/nominations should be collected by this body, since the AIACC can make recommendations for the BCBA licensure board membership.

Another bill the Council has followed closely is State Bill 196 which would allow persons on the spectrum to have that information added to their driver's licenses to assist first responders and law enforcement officers who might encounter these individuals. This bill has failed to be approved based on associated costs, but will be presented again, next session.

In Budgetary news, the Council has received an increase of about \$23,000 in the General Fund, while in the Education Trust Fund, the budget remained at \$63,900. Total AIACC funding is budgeted to be \$123,900 for FY 2014-2015.

In addition, Senator Ward commented on the lighting of the Capitol, in blue, in honor of Autism Awareness Month.

State Coordinator, Anna McConnell stated that in reference to the budget increase, the Council will be looking at ways to best use the additional funds. The funds could help move in the direction of regional networks. The Strategic Plan update will hopefully provide information on next steps for moving forward.

She also shared that the typical meeting date of the 2nd Monday falls on Columbus Day in October, this year. Therefore, October 20th has been selected as the Fall 2014 AIACC meeting date. This will coincide with the Autism Provider Network meeting, and October 6th is Fall Break for a number of schools.

Due to Anna's maternity leave, she will not be present during the July meeting, but plans to return for the October meeting.

As she will not be present for the July meeting, Anna took the occasion to mention that the members rolling off of the Council in September are: Bama Hager, Hanes Swingle, Kathy Welch,

and Jerimie Goike. She expressed her sincere appreciation for their service, input, and dedication to those with ASD and to the AIACC.

Katie Naman, a School of Public Health Master's student from UAB, and Intern to the State Autism Office, who will be taking care of some things in Anna's absence, was introduced to the Council. Her internship will also include working with the Autism Society of Alabama (Bama Hager).

Kim Hill of the Bylaws/Membership Committee provided the following updates:

- Applications to fill the positions for a parent, an adult with ASD and two service providers currently held by Bama Hager, Hanes Swingle, Kathy Welch, and Jerimie Goike will be accepted April 14 – July 14th. The Membership/Bylaws Committee will compile received applications and submit those and recommendations to the Governor's office. They hope to have that done in time to have new membership in place for the October 20th AIACC meeting.
- The AIACC voted to have a 3 year term, 2 consecutive term limit. If past AIACC members would like to reapply, they are welcome to do so, as long as there was a gap in time of service.
- The Membership Application is available on the AIACC website at: (www.autism.alabama.gov).
- Since Bama Hager and Hanes Swingle will be rolling off the AIACC in September, the AIACC will also need to elect a co-chair and new representative for the Executive Committee. This vote will take place at the October 20th meeting.

Greg Carlson talked about the Medicaid waiver. He requested public comments given by the Department of Mental Health, Alabama Arise and ADAP be placed on the AIACC website. Also he mentioned the Oregon Transformation Center as a model for incorporating disabilities and improved screening for developmental disabilities.

Bama Hager shared on behalf of Melanie Jones of the Special Project Committee: They are working on Project Lifesaver in every county. There are currently 47 counties that have the program. Persons interested in that county list should contact Bama for details.

Anna spoke briefly about the Autism Friendly Campaign for businesses.

In Member Updates:

- Mr. Lafreniere shared that Keystone from Pennsylvania came to talk with DMH about their service structure. They offer autism services, an autism waiver, etc. They started off with a task force, then a council, and it developed into a Bureau

for Autism Services within the Division of DD in PA. He also announced there will be an Individual and Family Advisory Committee – if anyone has recommendations for this group, contact Anna McConnell.

- Council Member Joshua Heard recently received an award that allowed for a semester of free housing at Auburn University.
- Kathy Welch shared that Easter Seals will present a one-day workshop for parents and professionals: Sensory Processing Disorders with Dr. Ashley Perry, PhD. On April 25th, 2014. <http://www.eastersealsca.org/programs-autism-workshop.aspx>
- Susan Goldthwaite of the Department of Education talked about upcoming DOE meetings for the Autism Leadership Team (1 person from each school district/LEA will participate). This will facilitate better communication and access to resources. She offered the AIACC the opportunity to share with the team during future meetings. Upcoming meetings: April 17 & 25 for north and south Alabama.
- Myra Jones reported that the Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities is offering an Innovative Ideas RFP. She also announced the AL_APSE conference, June 18th – June 20th in Mobile. Registration available on-line at the following site: <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07e8geq9rv7af254da&oseq=&c=&ch=>
- Dr. Fred Biasini shared that the Simpson-Ramsey Symposium is Thursday, April 17th.
- Russell Green of Alabama Medicaid mentioned the roll out/deadline for Medicaid to have new programs settled is October 2016. They had public comment and are now reviewing those. The best way to stay up to date on progress is the Alabama Medicaid website. He also mentioned that it might be beneficial to have a Medicaid representative come in for a Q & A time about the implications for ASD and the rollout.
- Kim Hill of ADRS noted that the EI/Pre-K Conference in Mobile will feature two autism specific sessions.

As a result of Joint Senate Resolution 117, the AIACC will now include assistance to individuals with Neurodevelopmental Disorders within the scope of its mission, particularly Rett Syndrome. Sheryl Hand was present to receive the resolution.

Guest Speaker, Dr. Whitney Meade provided specific information regarding the *Master of Education: Autism Concentration* Degree program available from the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Students who successfully complete the program will earn a Master of Education

which will lead to a Class A certification in K-6 Elementary Education or a Class A certification in K-6 or 6-12 Special Education. Application may be made on-line at www.uah.edu/graduate. Questions may be submitted to Dr. Whitney Mead at whitney.meade@uah.edu.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Next meeting: July 14, 2014

Recording Secretary

_____ 4/14/2014
C. S. Weldon