

Indiana licensed Child Care Center Director's Advisory Board
February 16, 2012
Minutes

Attending: Lisa Clifford, Janet Couch, Heidi Dowell, Tim Dunnuck, Lori Emmett, Mike Garatoni, Deb Hughes, Carol Johnson, Terri Kosik, Jessica Lewis, Sharon Molargik, Debby Rowan (for herself and proxy for Tom Rayl), Judy Smith, Gail Stout.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Carol Johnson. There were no announcements. There was nothing to report from the Bureau of Child Care other than the date of the next meeting needs to be changed from April 19th to April 12th.

Lucinda Nord, Public Policy at Indiana Association of United Ways gave an overview of this legislative session and a preview of what to expect next session. She e-mailed everyone a copy of *Excerpts from Bill Tracking List aligned with IaUW Policy Priorities* that pertained to early childhood and all the bills they were following are on their web site. Overall, it was a remarkable year for early childhood/child care with the number of bills that were introduced. Unfortunately, many of them died from lack of a hearing. 1136 is still alive that would recognize the Registered Ministry Advisory Board the same as the Licensed Center and Family Child Care Advisory Boards. 268 is still alive and that would establish an advisory committee on early education which was lacking in Indiana when *Race to the Top* funds were put out for bid.

Some of the other good things that happened for child care are as follows:

- Rep. Behning, and the Education Committee are looking at early childhood for the first time and now *getting it* that quality early childhood education is important before children enter kindergarten.
- 1323 proposed raising standards for providers that accept CCDF Vouchers
- 1322 offered tax credits to parents that used level 3 or 4 (Paths to Quality) providers. It was a good incentive but it was hurt by the fact that it had a fiscal impact.
- Republicans took the lead on many early childhood bills which is unusual.

Lucinda did ask the group if anyone had any comments about regulations being too burdensome since some legislators had heard that and thought maybe they needed to back off on some of the regulations but no one in the group expressed any concerns about current regulations.

What do we do next? Next year is questionable at best. There will be a new Governor and up to half of the legislators next year could have 2 years or less experience in the legislature. There seems to be more of an attitude of 'either you're with us or against us' and not a spirit of compromise. It is going to take one on one relationship with each legislator. Even though not-for-profits cannot engage in political campaigns or support particular candidates or parties, they can attend forums, ask questions, and invite all candidates to visit their centers. The lack of definition of 'preschool' is on the radar. The President submitted his proposed budget which has increases for CCDF and Head Start. He has also proposed more strength in the quality standards for CCDF funds. The Indiana Coalition for Human Services will be holding candidate forums across the state. It was suggested that child care providers attend and ask each candidate his/her position of early childhood education.