



**Nebraska Early Childhood Education Endowment
Board of Trustees
November 10, 2010
Minutes**

Prior to the opening of the meeting, Kathleen Feller (NCFF) showed a video of the Sixpence program in Crete, Nebraska, presented at the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) conference. The presentation at NAEYC was given by Kathleen Feller and Martha Nash, showcasing the Sixpence programs in Crete and York, and focused on public-private partnerships.

I. MEETING OPENING

The meeting of the Sixpence Board of Trustees was called to order at 1:00 p.m. on November 10, 2010, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), 215 Centennial Mall South, 2nd floor conference room, Lincoln.

Members present: Mel Clancy, Melody Hobson (representing the Commissioner of Education), Jessie Rasmussen, Todd Reckling (representing the CEO of NDHHS).

Also in attendance: Melody Hobson, Martha Nash, Diane Kvasnicka, Sharon Katt, Greg Prochaska, and Margaret Worth from NDE; and Mike Timmins, Kathleen Feller, Becky Veak, Jody Hatz, and Jen Hernandez (meeting recorder) from NCFF.

Jessie Rasmussen, Chair, opened the meeting and noted the Open Meetings Act information was posted inside the room.

A motion was made by Mel Clancy *to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2010 meeting*. Second by Melody Hobson. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Mel Clancy, Todd Reckling, Jessie Rasmussen, and Melody Hobson. No opposition.

II. MANAGEMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

Update on Endowment Financials

Greg reported that since last meeting, all but one of the 09-10 projects have been paid. \$2.2M in the bank currently. Greg estimates \$1.4M to fund next year's activities, not including next year's receipts. Greg suggests the next distribution should be soon.

Update on Private Distribution

Mike reported that of the \$20M, we have collected \$12.2M in cash. In the last two years, there has been a healthy capital gain of over \$1M.

No new pledges since the last meeting.

Mike will make a recommendation for a \$210,000 distribution to the private investment committee by December 1, 2010.

Without a quorum present, the Trustees did not take action or make a decision about new grants, but did engage in a brief discussion about being prepared to release the RFP in 2011 for new grants in 2012. This will be listed as an action item on the agenda for the January meeting.

III. ENDOWMENT ADMINISTRATION

Rule 11 Teacher Qualifications

The Trustees held a discussion regarding infant toddler teachers because the qualifications in the Endowment are different than those in Rule 11. Lincoln and Omaha are the current Sixpence programs using degreed people, but are not certified as teachers.

Sharon Katt (administrator for Teacher Certification) explained that teacher/educator preparation is governed by Rule 20 (what teacher are teacher preparation requirements), Rule 21 (what certificates are available in Nebraska), and Rule 24 (Nebraska's guidelines for what a preparation program must include as far as content requirements).

Rule 21 – Three categories of certificates: administrative (not germane to this discussion), teaching, and special services (i.e., school nurses, school psychologists, others that support the work of teachers in the school).

The definition of "teach" in Nebraska is defined in Nebraska Revised Statute, Chapter 79-101. "Teach means and includes, but is not limited to, the following

responsibilities: (a) The organization and management of the classroom or the physical area in which the learning experiences of pupils taking place; (b) the assessment and diagnosis of the individual educational needs of the pupils; (c) the planning, selecting, organizing, prescribing, and directing of the learning experiences of the pupils; (d) the planning of teaching strategies and the selection of available materials and equipment to be used; and (e) the evaluation and reporting of student progress.

Rule 24 – Endorsements: preschool disabilities (birth through Kindergarten), Early Care and Education (birth through Grade 3), Early Childhood Unified (birth through Grade 3), and early childhood special education (birth through Grade 3). A fifth endorsement is underway, called Early Care and Education (birth through Kindergarten), orchestrated by University of Nebraska, Lincoln. The endorsements currently overlap.

Changes in rules take a considerable amount of time. The process starts with a body of 56 individuals called the Nebraska Council on Teacher Education, who makes recommendations to the State Board of Education. The State Board makes decision and it goes to public hearing, then back to the State Board. It then goes to the Attorney General, and finally to the Governor's office for final approval. The process can take a year or more.

Jessie raised a question about allowing school districts a "grace period" to complete the certification requirements. That practice happened in the past, but doesn't follow current legal process. What options are available to allow the people most qualified to work with infants and toddlers (i.e., bachelor degree in child development, but do not have a certificate) to meet the requirements and be certified as a teacher?

Goal: Forge a path so that bachelor degreed individuals trained in child development (or other fields approved by Endowment) can earn a teaching certificate required by Rule 11.

Option 1 – Provisional commitment certificate is a "provisional" certificate, issued for 3 years, and allows an individual with a degree to complete a teacher certification. It requires individuals to complete 6 hours per year.

Option 2 – Provisional endorsement option for those who already have a teaching certificate, but not an endorsement.

Option 3 – One other option to consider as a model is the "Transition to Teaching" program. Requires transcript review and meeting 75% of content, completing education online, 3 6-hour modules (eq. to 18 hours of professional education), clinical component completed while the individual is employed and working, and at the end of the process, they have a teaching certificate. Currently, this is being done only for secondary education, but this could be a model to create a pathway for degreed people to get a teaching certificate.

Melody and Sharon will return in January prepared to inform the Board with more information, who will then decide if they are ready to place it as an action item on the March agenda.

Home visitation definition and requirements will also be discussed by the Board when the home visitation component of Rule 11 comes up.

Quality Indicator Clarification

Supervisor Observation: Quality Indicator currently states: *Program Supervisor accompanies Family Educators/home visitor on a minimum of three personal visits every six months.* For those with small caseloads or for those with only half a caseload, can there be an option for 2 every 6 months, instead of 3 every 6 months. There is concern that it is intrusive for the family, and interferes with the home visiting.

The intent at the time of writing was to have a supervisor accompany the home visitor on visits with different families, and the indicator was written assuming the home visitor was full time. Based on some home visitors being part time, allowing supervisors to accompany the home visitor on 2 visits (instead of 3) every 6 months could be interpreted consistent with the original intent. Kathleen will write up how the language should read and bring it before the Board in January for an action item.

Para-educator Requirements: Quality Indicator currently states: *Assistant/paraprofessional-A child development Associate (CDA) or higher* Kathleen is asking for clarification. Do all para-educators/assistant teachers need to have a CDA, or can one para-educator have a CDA and the other (i.e., third para in the classroom) have 12 hours and meet Rule 11, but not have the CDA?

Kathleen will write up proposed language and bring it before the Board in January for an action item.

Future Opportunities for Sixpence

Kathleen reported on responses from grantees regarding future funding opportunities. She provided a handout on strengths, weaknesses, general input, and innovation.

Federal Home Visitation Opportunities

Kathleen provided a handout from the Nebraska ACA Home Visiting Program Statewide Needs Assessment, which highlights 17 counties at highest risk for

poor outcomes. Kathleen will continue to talk with the Office of Public Health in the event there are opportunities to collaborate or be informed by each other's work.

End of Year Three Reporting Document

Kathleen distributed a template for the Trustees to review and asked for their feedback and suggestions for edits.

The Board requested that each program's evaluation profile be attached to the End of the Year Three report when completed so the Board would have a more complete picture of impact.

Santee and Macy Progress

Technical assistance provided by Martha Nash and Kathleen Feller included re-training and intensive communication several times each week.

In Santee, Martha and Kathleen feel their commitment to quality improvements is sincere and strong, but are concerned that sufficient administrative support may not exist to facilitate necessary improvements.

In Macy, Martha and Kathleen have met with the Superintendant and discussed areas of concern and then met in a follow-up meeting with the program director, elementary principal and the superintendent to update their program Action Plan and set up training. TA continues to be provided.

Enrollment Update

Broken Bow's low enrollment is an issue of staff turnover. Kathleen is working with them on an action plan to address.

Lincoln has put together a turnover plan that enrollment will be up by end of December. They have had numerous turnovers and struggle with students (teen parents) not attending. Kathleen suggested Lincoln visit the Crete program. Turnover has affected relationships between teen parents and home visitor. They are putting together a plan to reach enrollment by the end of the year.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be 1:00-3:00 p.m. January 19, 2011, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), 215 Centennial Mall South, 2nd floor conference room, Lincoln.

2011 Meeting dates

Wednesday, January 19, 2011
Wednesday, March 9, 2011
Wednesday, May 11, 2011
Wednesday, June 8, 2011
Wednesday, July 13, 2011
Wednesday, September 14, 2011
Wednesday, November 16, 2011

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.



**Nebraska Early Childhood Education Endowment
Board of Trustees
September 8, 2010
Minutes**

I. MEETING OPENING

The meeting of the Sixpence Board of Trustees was called to order at 1:00 p.m. on September 8, 2010, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), 215 Centennial Mall South, second floor conference room, Lincoln.

Members present: Melody Hobson (representing the Commissioner of Education), Jessie Rasmussen, Mel Clancy, Beth Schuler, Helen Raikes.

Also in attendance: Martha Nash, Greg Prochaska, and Scott Summers from NDE; and Kathleen Feller, Jody Hatz, and Becky Veak (meeting recorder) from NCFF.

Jessie Rasmussen, Chair, opened the meeting and noted the Open Meetings Act information was posted inside the room.

A motion was made by Beth Schuler *to approve the minutes from the August 23, 2010 meeting with a correction on page 5 that reflects "HHS has several contracts with NCFF" not "HHS has several contracts with HHS"*. Motion seconded as amended by Mel Clancy. Voting aye: Mel Clancy, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, and Melody Hobson. No opposition.

II. MANAGEMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

Update on Endowment Financials

Greg Prochaska reported on the financials which are down from the last report. He added future projections including monthly interest earned and three more quarterly disbursements through June 30, 2011. Based on the financials being lower than expected, a new estimate per quarter for projected purposes was documented at \$286,000. Even if current revenue and grants remain the same, it will be difficult to open up the RFP process for full proposals. The financials assumed no private distributions in 2010-2011.

Technical Assistance Contract Approval

Kathleen reported on the contract for funding technical assistance. It includes an increase of \$1,423 over last year's contract for cost of living adjustments and benefits. The total amount of the contract is \$90,574. As an addendum, additional costs associated with increasing more grants was shown as was the marketing costs provided by NCFF. The trustees asked Kathleen to include next year a projected amount of in-kind costs provided by the Department of Education for technical assistance.

A motion to authorize the contract for an amount up to \$90,574 was made by Mel Clancy and seconded by Melody Hobson. Voting aye: Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen and Beth Schuler.

III. ENDOWMENT ADMINISTRATION

Mini Quality Grant Opportunities for 2010

The board discussed the potential of offering one-time mini grants in an amount around \$10,000 - \$15,000 and what those might look like. Several ideas were suggested: 1) offering technical assistance to schools and communities on building partnerships for future applications; 2) offering seed money to use on experimental opportunities; 3) providing additional technical assistance for special needs identified by the applicant or capacity-building grants; 4) innovation grants; 4) planning grants; small grants that will lead to later expansion; 5) needs assessment grant based on their needs; 6) possible augmentation of programs by providing infant mental health coaching; 7) funding to implement a Positive Behavioral Support (PBIS) program;.

The board had a lengthy discussion regarding the possibility of revising the RFP and thinking of this as an opportunity to act on lessons learned now that the initial three-year grants are entering their final year. They revisited the issue of whether these grants should continue receiving funding as long as they are meeting the standards. They reconfirmed this is the right thing to do and is one of the original tenants of the endowment to invest in high quality environments.

The value of providing technical assistance to the programs was discussed and how it helps programs maintain continuous quality improvement. Most programs are excellent in meeting the quality standards and have minor issues such as documentation. Next year, Kathleen will provide the progress report on the programs in two categories: 1) programs who are mostly meeting the standards and making ongoing improvements; and 2) programs with major concerns.

For programs with major concerns, a process for defunding programs will be discussed in the future. Some procedures have already been put into place based on direction given by the board at the August 2010 meeting. The trustees want to continue this discussion and not take action at this time.

Kathleen will gather further information for the trustees by asking the current grantees: 1) the strengths and weaknesses of the RFP; 2) is there something different they feel they could be doing to serve children with the greatest need; and 3) what would it take to get them there.

A motion was made by Beth Schuler and seconded by Mel Clancy to table taking action on this issue. Voting aye: Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, and Beth Schuler

Kathleen will bring information to the next meeting for discussion.

Rule 11

Melody Hobson reviewed the process that will be undertaken by NDE to open up Rule 11 for possible revisions. It is anticipated that draft recommendations will go to the State Board of Education by late fall 2010 or early spring 2011 for a decision to go to public hearing on Rule 11. At that point, NDE will provide 30-days notice prior to a public hearing. Issues such as para-educator requirements, certified teacher requirements, early learning guidelines, and home visitation (level of intensity and duration, how are these home visitation programs different from what DHHS funds for home visiting) will be on the table for discussion. In addition, how do requirements for Sixpence fit into Rule 11.

The trustees want to be involved and represented at the table and discussed the process for doing so. Kathleen and Martha will be invited to participate in the discussions and will keep the trustees informed as to how they can be involved. At the very least, one member of the Board of Trustees should participate. Kathleen and Martha will ask for input from the grantees next week during monitoring visits. Staff qualifications for Sixpence are likely to be on the table now that we are three years into the funding and have some experience to note. Special care should be made in attempting to sequence what we envision early childhood professionals to be trained on and should follow a natural progression: early learning guidelines, CDA, Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree.

The November meeting will include further discussion on this issue and ask for action from the trustees.

Terms of Office

To prepare for the first round of new appointments to the Board of Trustees, Kathleen reported that Helen Raikes term is up in December 2010. There is nothing in the by-laws that indicates board members cannot be reappointed. Helen indicated she is interested in having her name be resubmitted to the Governor for consideration of reappointment. The private endowment provider (NCFF) will undertake a process for nomination of private sector names to the Governor.

End of year three reporting requirements

The trustees discussed the end of the initial three-year grant period. Kathleen asked the trustees: 1) whether they wanted to proceed with continuation funding for current grantees or require grantees to undergo a competitive process and reapply for funding; and 2) what kind of information they want to receive in the year-end report.

A lengthy discussion occurred regarding pros and cons of requiring the current grantees to compete for funding. Concern was raised regarding the disruption that would occur in programs and the lack of continuity for families, children and communities. The trustees agreed as long as programs are meeting the quality indicators, they should continue to receiving funding.

The following are questions that Kathleen and Martha will ask grantees:

- Name your highlights and successes;
- What were your challenges;
- What is your plan for the upcoming year;
- Are there any course adjustments you would make;
- Based on your evaluation information; how do you think you could be more effective;
- What is your transition plan for children leaving your program;
- How do you deal with the turnover of children in the program and the lack of participation;
- How do you deal with the turnover of staff; how will you retain staff;
- What didn't we ask that you want to tell us?

The message to grantees should be that their proposal will be an expanded year-end report and should not be considered an application. It will include a three-year budget rather than an annual budget. Kathleen will ask Lincoln and Omaha, each with two programs, their preference on submitting one report or two.

A motion was made by Mel Clancy to table this as an action item; Beth Schuler seconded the motion. Voting aye: Melody Hobson, Beth Schuler, Mel Clancy, Helen Raikes, and Jessie Rasmussen.

NAEYC Annual Conference

Kathleen and Martha will present on the Sixpence program at the annual NAEYC Conference. Representatives from the Crete and York programs will participate in the workshop and discuss their programmatic experience.

Enrollment Update

Kathleen gave an enrollment update and, overall, the enrollment is 30 children lower than the last report. The Broken Bow and Lincoln programs have both lost home visitors and are still trying to hire replacements. The lower numbers might be due to all information having not yet been input into the system. The lower

numbers may also be reflective of the beginning of the new school year. The trustees want to send a strong message that they want to keep the programs full.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be November 10, from **12:00-3:00** p.m. at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation office, second floor conference room. Lunch will be provided

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.



**Nebraska Early Childhood Education Endowment
Board of Trustees
August 23, 2010
Minutes**

I. MEETING OPENING

The meeting of the Sixpence Board of Trustees was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on August 23, 2010, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), 215 Centennial Mall South, 2nd floor conference room, Lincoln.

Members present: Melody Hobson (representing the Commissioner of Education) until the Commissioner arrived, Roger Breed, Jessie Rasmussen, Todd Reckling (representing the CEO of NDHHS), Beth Schuler.

Also in attendance: Carol Fichter, Melody Hobson, Martha Nash, Greg Prochaska, and Margaret Worth from NDE; and Kathleen Feller, Becky Veak, and Jen Hernandez (meeting recorder) from NCFF.

Jessie Rasmussen, Chair, opened the meeting and noted the Open Meetings Act information was posted inside the room.

A motion was made by Beth Schuler *to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2010 meeting*. Second by Todd Reckling. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Todd Reckling, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Melody Hobson. No opposition.

II. MANAGEMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

Update on Endowment Financials

Greg was unable to be here, but sent financial statements. Kathleen reported that there were no distributions since last meeting (July) and no changes. Private side is still deciding if they will make a distribution in September.

For September agenda – discussion of any new grant awards, including small planning grants.

Continuation Grant Approval

Kathleen provided a summary of each grant recipient: program successes, program action needed, as well as recommendations from Martha Nash and Kathleen Feller to the Board. (See attached summary "2010 Grantee Continuation Funding Recommendations.")

Alliance: Board discussion of program action needed, including 2 paraprofessionals not meeting minimum training standards. Programs have until July 2011 to meet staff qualifications. As turnover happens, programs are finding it difficult to find paraprofessionals with minimum training standards. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Broken Bow: Kathleen walked the Trustees through the program successes, including a huge increase in attendance at socialization. Need further documentation and Family Partnership Agreements that address all required areas. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Crete: Kathleen reported that 90% of the children have stayed with the program since it began, and that they have expanded Sixpence into a childcare classroom. The HV needs to complete required training, and significant adjustments need to be made in supervisory practices. Documentation needs to be improved. Trustees discussed concerns about an exclusive Sixpence classroom, which happens as a result of not being able to meet staff quality indicators in all classrooms. (Don't want funding streams to define classrooms.) Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Lincoln (Quality Enhancement): This is their center-based program. They have shifted program philosophy from a childcare program that worked on development to an educational childcare. The (new, perhaps January?) infant teacher does not have a degree of any kind, but the program met this indicator at one time. The Trustees reaffirmed that by July 2011, the lead teacher must have a degree. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Lincoln (Access Expansion): In the essence of time, Trustees can read program successes provided in summary on their own. Documentation improvements and Family Partnership Agreement improvements needed. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Loup City: Documentation improvements and Family Partnership Agreement improvements needed. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Omaha (Transition): Some assistant teachers meet Rule 11, but do not have CDA's. Not all staff have attended Early Learning Guidelines training. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Omaha (Access Expansion): Staff and training improvements needed by July 2011. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Plattsmouth: Need improvements in home visitor supervision and Family Partnership Agreements. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan.

Santee: No current leadership, as Program Director has been promoted to be the Elementary Principal. Extensive staffing issues meeting quality indicators. Home visits and conferences were not completed. Kathleen did TA visits 4-5 times in the last year, but plans established were not followed through with. Attendance has been consistently minimal. Kathleen discussed possibility of offering different services (home visitation vs. center based), but the Superintendent was not interested. Recommendation: approve for continuation with action plan and increased technical assistance and monitoring.

UMON'HON Nation: None of the quality indicators were met. Recommendation: approval for continuation with action plan and intense technical assistance and monitoring.

Walthill: Still have many improvements to make, but the program has greatly improved environment and attendance. Superintendent is extremely supportive. Recommendation: approval for continuation with action plan.

York: Needs improved system for documentation. Recommendation: approval for continuation with action plan.

Motion by Helen Raikes *to approve for continuation funding with action plans for Alliance, Broken Bow, Crete, Lincoln (Quality Enhancement), Lincoln (Access Expansion), Loup City, Omaha (Transition), Omaha (Access Expansion), Plattsmouth, Walthill, and York, with a strong message that expectations for staff qualifications must be met by the end of the grant year (June 30, 2011).* Second by Beth Schuler. Todd Reckling disclosed that HHS has contracts with CSI (as subcontractor for child welfare) and VNA (home visitation). Roll call vote. Voting yes: Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Roger Breed, and Todd Reckling. No opposition.

Motion by Helen Raikes *to approve continuation funding with action plans for Santee and UMON'HON Nation with the expectation that all qualifications except for staff qualifications are met by the end of the 2010 calendar year, and that staff qualifications are met by the end of the grant year (June 30, 2011).* Second by Jessie Rasmussen. Further discussion about if meeting these qualifications are feasible. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Roger Breed, Todd Reckling, Helen Raikes.

Grantee request for carryover of funds

Kathleen provided a brief description of carryover funds requested by Crete, UMON'HON Nation, and Plattsmouth. (See attached "Sixpence Carryover of Funds Request, 2009-2010 Grant Cycle".)

Crete: Total requested carryover \$35,787.37.

UMON'HON Nation: Total requested carryover \$11,915.98.

Plattsmouth: Total requested \$22,546.33.

Motion by Helen Raikes *to approve carryover funds as requested*. Second by Roger. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Beth Schuler, Roger Breed, Todd Reckling, Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen. No opposition.

III. ENDOWMENT ADMINISTRATION

Election of Officers

Annually, by majority vote, this Board must elect a Chair and Vice Chair. Beginning with the September 2010 meeting, need to elect a Chair and Vice Chair to new one-year terms. Motion by Helen Raikes *to elect Jessie Rasmussen as Chair and Beth Schuler as Vice Chair for 2010-2011*. Second by Roger Breed. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Roger Breed, Todd Reckling, Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler. No opposition.

Early Learning Guidelines Equivalencies

Kathleen worked with Margaret Worth to draft the Trustee's official position on approval of meeting of quality indicators, using the tool previously approved by the Board.

All staff of Sixpence grant programs who work with infants and toddlers must either hold a certificate of completion of training in the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines from the Nebraska Early Childhood Training Center or have completed equivalencies. Equivalent training must include six hours of training in each of the seven domains, which include: approaches to learning; creative arts; health and physical development; language and literacy; math; science; social and emotional. The requested equivalent training must match the objectives and instruction outlined in the Equivalency Approval Tool. Sixpence technical assistance personnel will monitor program compliance with this quality indicator during the annual monitoring visit.

Motion by Roger Breed *to approve the process of approving Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) Equivalencies*. Second by Todd Reckling. Further discussion on questioning whether or not staff working with infants and toddlers must hold a certificate of training in ELG or have completed equivalencies. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Todd Reckling, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Roger Breed. Helen Raikes abstained from voting.

Technical Assistance Contract

Last year, the cost of TA contract was over the \$50,000 maximum allowed without a bidding process. At that time, considering Margaret's three options of sole source, Public Urgency, and Competitive Bidding, the Trustees approved the TA contract based on sole source. The TA contract is again up for renewal on October 31.

Kathleen posed the question to the Trustees: Do we decide at this point what the method is? If we need to put it out for bid, we are going to be pressed to do that in 60 days.

Kathleen updated the Board on the status of each item used for justification in making their decision last year.

1. NCFF will now have 3 years experience doing the TA.
2. Community of Interest (including private endowment provider) with regard to this role
3. Private in-kind contribution of approximately \$90,000.

There was clarification that the TA contract is a one year contract with no renewal clause.

Motion by Roger Breed to *proceed on TA contract under sole source guidelines for at least the next year*. Second by Helen Raikes. There was further discussion about needing to allow 3-6 months timeframe to allow for bidders. Todd Reckling disclosed that HHS has several contracts with HHS. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Roger Breed, Todd Reckling. No opposition.

Para-educator Requirements – discussion tabled

Enrollment Update – discussion tabled

Rule 11 – discussion tabled, with request that this item be given a certain level of priority on the next agenda.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be September 8, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation office, 2nd floor conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.



**Nebraska Early Childhood Education Endowment
Board of Trustees
July 14, 2010
Minutes**

I. MEETING OPENING

The meeting of the Sixpence Board of Trustees was called to order at 1:00 p.m. on July 14, 2010, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), 215 Centennial Mall South, 2nd floor conference room, Lincoln.

Members present: Mel Clancy, Chris Hanus (representing the CEO of HHS), Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Scott Swisher (representing the Commissioner of Education).

Also in attendance: Martha Nash, Joan Luebbers, Greg Prochaska, and Margaret Worth from NDE; Barb Jackson and Rosie Zweiback from Monroe Meyer; and Kathleen Feller, Becky Veak, and Jen Hernandez (meeting recorder) from NCFF.

Jessie Rasmussen, Chair, opened the meeting and noted the Open Meetings Act information was posted inside the room.

A motion was made by Mel Clancy *to approve the minutes from the May 12, 2010 meeting*. Second by Beth Schuler. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Mel Clancy, Chris Hanus, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler. Scott Swisher abstained. No opposition.

II. MANAGEMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

Review Endowment Financials

Greg reported the current cash balance is \$3,035,438.02. After 2010 obligations, \$1,979,536.11 will be left.

Just before the end of this fiscal year, the Cash Fund received another distribution of \$285,002.15. Greg suggested that, if receipts and expenses stay

consistent, this latest \$285,002 distribution is not a surplus, but will be needed to sustain current investments.

Mel suggested the Investment Council attend on a regular basis. The Board discussed inviting the Investment Council to attend three times a year.

Review Endowment Private Distribution

Mike Timmins reported on private distributions. Previous report was overly optimistic. In May and June, the private side lost over \$400,000 each month in capital gain, so there will be no distribution at this time. They would like to make a distribution in September and one in December. In the first two weeks of July, recouped half its loss, but still has not recovered.

Jessie stated that the Board may want to consider small planning grants.

III. ENDOWMENT ADMINISTRATION

Evaluation report 2009-2010

Barb Jackson distributed a 2009-2010 Annual Report and a PowerPoint presentation on the Sixpence programs. She also proposed additional data analysis.

In summary Sixpence programs are providing high quality classroom and family engagement services. The children served demonstrated significant improvement in social-emotional skills but maintained language skills with no significant improvement. Parents involved in the programs have shown improvement on family measures. Finally all children are healthy but safety practices can be strengthened.

Grantee carryover funds

At least one grantee will be asking to carry funds into next year, so the Board needs to answer questions, such as:

1. Should funds be allowed to be carried over?
2. Should funds be restricted to one time costs in order to avoid the inability to sustain the increase in the following year's grant?
3. Should the amount to be carried over be limited?
4. Should the criteria for carryover of funds be more rigorous?

Kathleen raised the issue of flexibility. For example, all funds not spent in the expense of employee and benefits, but they could, perhaps, use those extra funds for supplies for the children.

Beth suggested the policy may not need to be reworded, allowing discretion for Board approval of carryover plans.

Margaret suggested thinking about adding sunset dates to the policy.

The Board decided to leave the carryover policy as is.

Rule 11

Teacher Qualifications – Margaret provided a handout on teacher qualifications requirements for school districts' early childhood education programs. She reported that there is a statutory requirement that NDE approve programs, specifically requiring teachers be certified and endorsed under Rule 11. If a teacher does not have that endorsement, they must be pursuing it. In state statute, definition of "teaching."

There is nothing in the Endowment's statutes that require grants to go to programs that meet Rule 11 teacher qualifications, but there is the requirement that grants go to school districts, and school districts must meet the teacher qualifications in Rule 11.

What if there is a master teacher that has the identified responsibilities, but a teacher (with a BA) without the endorsement.

Generally, early childhood degree programs do not offer sufficient coursework and classroom experience in infant, toddler development.

Question: How many programs have teachers that are not early childhood endorsed? Answer: Omaha and Lincoln.

To become certified with a Bachelors degree with an early childhood endorsement is a huge challenge.

Margaret reported that NDE is in initial stages of discussion of adding an additional special early childhood teaching certificate. Another possible avenue to pursue is statutory changes around staff of birth to three years of age.

Kathleen and Martha already have some feedback from grantees regarding teacher qualifications. Kathleen did mention that the grantees who do meet the certification and endorsement requirements are the programs that are having a more difficult time meeting the standards in the grant, but those programs with teachers with a BA are exhibiting higher quality.

Beth suggested recognizing differences in primary and secondary home visitation services, and that the teacher qualifications for those two different roles should be defined differently.

Jessie asked that, if NDE were going to move forward to defund these programs who do not meet teacher qualifications, the Board be given advance notice in order to plan.

Chris asked if there were any other states who have encountered similar difficulties.

Margaret reported there is not yet a preliminary draft of Rule 11, so there is still time for the Board to continue its discussion.

Early Learning Guidelines Equivalencies – tabled

Technical Assistance Contract - tabled

Draft Attendance Policy

In follow up from the previous meeting, Kathleen brought a written attendance policy for the Board to vote on.

Margaret informed the Board that in order to enforce this against the programs, it must be included in grant agreements in coming years. It can be included in the renewal (or continuation) of grants.

In Head Start, anytime daily attendance falls below 85%, a program must explain why attendance is low.

When programs fall below any quality indicators, they must develop an action plan to meet the indicator.

Mel Clancy made a motion to accept the attendance policy as written for 1 year, requiring action plans if attendance falls below 85%, with a review of this policy at the end of the 2010-11. Motion seconded by Beth Schuler. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Chris Hanus, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Scott Swisher, and Mel Clancy. No opposition.

State Advisory Council Letter of Support – provided to the Trustees for their information.

York Public Schools Staffing Request

York would like to hire a full time Family Educator (Home Visitor) with a BA in Business Administration and 20 hours of Early Childhood Training. No experience with infants and toddlers or home visitation

Motion made by Mel Clancy to not approve the York staffing request, but give the option to provide additional information. Second by Chris Hanus. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Scott Swisher, Mel Clancy, Chris Hanus. No opposition.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 25th, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation office, 2nd floor conference room.

The September meeting will be Wednesday, September 8, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation office, 2nd floor conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm.



**Nebraska Early Childhood Education Endowment
Board of Trustees
May 12, 2010
Minutes**

I. MEETING OPENING

The meeting of the Sixpence Board of Trustees was called to order at 1:00 p.m. on May 12, 2010, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), 215 Centennial Mall South, 2nd floor conference room, Lincoln.

Members present: Mel Clancy, Melody Hobson (representing the Commissioner of Education), Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, and Beth Schuler.

Also in attendance: Cheryl Wolf from the Governor's Policy Research Office; William Scheideler, Matthew Eash, Gary Bush, Department of Administrative Services, Budget Division; Martha Nash, Joan Luebbers, Greg Prochaska, and Margaret Worth from NDE; Joe Jurich from the Nebraska Investment Council; Amy Bunnell from DHHS; and Kathleen Feller, Mike Timmins, Becky Veak, and Jen Hernandez (meeting recorder) from NCFF.

Jessie Rasmussen, Chair, opened the meeting and noted the Open Meetings Act information was posted inside the room.

Melody Hobson made a motion *to amend the March 10, 2010, minutes (referring to page 3) to reflect the definition and requirements of home visitors should be a new issue for further discussion.* Second by Mel Clancy. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler. No opposition.

A motion was made by Mel Clancy *to approve the amended minutes from the March 10, 2010 meeting.* Second by Helen Raikes. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Mel Clancy, Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, and Melody Hobson. No opposition.

II. MANAGEMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

State Investment Council Presentation

Nebraska Investment Council's (NIC) goal is to build a portfolio that can weather the storms better than other portfolios. Joe stated the NIC pays close attention to:

- Leverage (use of loans to enhance returns, corporate performance, or lifestyle)
- Globalization
- Regulations

They are currently seeing de-leveraging, de-globalizing, and de-regulating as it relates to investing.

Joe reported on the asset allocation for the Early Childhood Endowment. (See attached handout for further detail on asset allocation.) At the beginning of 2009, public assets invested were \$31.7 million. As of March 31, 2010, the Endowment has \$38.3 million assets. Joe offered an end of April estimate of \$38.8 million. Joe is unsure what the lowest point (in assets) was.

He described the investment practice as 50% stocks, 50% bonds, with a monthly leveling process to ensure each endowment in the pool of endowments gets the appropriate share.

Since 2004, NIC has used Ennis, Knupp, and Associates for investment consulting. They calculate the expected rate of return (target percentage of asset allocation for each asset class, multiply by expected rate of return, sum, and get expected rate of return) currently to be 5.834%.

In the last six months, there has been a 3% rate of return experienced by the pool of endowments (Operating Investment Pool, aka General Fund). William clarified that interest begins accruing after the money is transferred from the General Fund to the cash fund.

Joe also discussed performance, offering a disclaimer that the first quarter 2010 distribution is an unaudited number. (See same attached handout.) Notwithstanding, the portfolio has earned approximately 3.99% for first quarter 2010 vs. benchmark return of 3.69%.

Question: Our sense is that the market is coming back, but distribution continues to go down. Is it a matter of timing? Answer: Bonds earning less than they were 2 years ago.

Question: Based on the assumption that choices are being made about where to invest, are there changes in how investments are made? Answer: Quick answer is no. Most clients are long term investors, so while review is constant, rely quite heavily (90%) on indexing, with essentially no change in a five year period.

Joe guided the Trustees through a distributions analysis. Through a review of records (including letters sent to the bank), he is attempting to estimate what percent will be distributed in the future. Joe thinks the 2008 distribution was high, and 2009 distributions are slightly lower while the total asset increased during that time. His guess is that in the next year, distribution will be around 3.5%.

It is common practice for an endowment to distribute 5%, but that's not what's happening with distributions to schools. Question: What about the law restricts distribution of 5%? Answer: AG office said that the current way of business was acceptable and compliant.

A typical endowment would have a much higher equity earning. Because of the nature of our legal wording and strategy, the Council feels that a portfolio 50/50 is the best option for stability and good management.

Question: Is our investment strategy driven by the most restrictive wording of any of the endowments in the entire portfolio. Answer: AG suggests this is appropriate and that no fund is being disadvantaged.

Question: If this Board wanted to pursue a different strategy, could they? Answer: NIC legal counsel can respond to that. The chair requested that Margaret ask the question of NIC legal counsel.

Joe also talked about fees, both NIC and management. The Investment Council is a cash agency with an appropriation, currently \$2,370,129. From that, NIC is charging this Board \$5,214 for the year, based on the assets under management. In addition, the annual management fee charged to this Board is \$57,146, which is .15% of assets.

Joe also broke down investments by asset class for the Trustees.

Review of Endowment Financials

Greg reported that the last distribution was similar to the previous one. The current cash balance (as of 5/11/10) is \$3,044,460.99. The Trustees are interested in the practice of distributions made within 60 days. There was brief discussion about the private dollars, and clarification that private distributions are made semi-annually (July and December).

Approval of Evaluation Proposal and Authority to Sign

Kathleen reported on the Sixpence Evaluation Plan, submitted by Barb Jackson. There are no changes in evaluation for the next grant cycle. There is a slight increase (\$1129) in the budget proposal, related to (1) hiring an evaluator to administer the ITERS, allowing the same evaluator to administer the ITERS, and (2) Increased travel for Barb to visit grantees annually and share program specific evaluation data

Barb is on the July agenda to present the preliminary evaluation and get feedback from the Trustees on further analysis. She will return in September to present final evaluation analysis.

Helen Raikes made a motion *to authorize the Sixpence Board Chair to enter into the contract for the next round of evaluation.* Second by Mel Clancy. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Melody Hobson. No opposition.

III. ENDOWMENT ADMINISTRATION

Enrollment Update

Kathleen provided an update on the anticipated and current enrolled numbers for each Sixpence program. Discussion followed that attendance and enrollment are about dosage. Helen suggested that if the Board adopts an attendance policy, it may also want to consider adopting an enrollment policy.

Question: Are home visiting programs collecting attendance data? Answer: Kathleen confirmed that home visiting programs are reporting how many minutes (out of the total required) they are spending in home visiting.

Approve Early Learning Guideline Equivalencies

ECTC has established a procedure for considering equivalencies. (See attached handout.) Motion by Beth *to approve the process to review training that Sixpence program staff complete as equivalent training required by the Sixpence quality indicators.* Second by Mel Clancy. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Helen Raikes. No opposition.

Motion by Mel Clancy *to approve Walthill as meeting the grant requirements for Early Learning Guidelines training in the area of creative arts based on documentation submitted.* Second by Beth Schuler. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Beth Schuler, Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Jessie Rasmussen. No opposition.

Kathleen will work with Margaret to refine the process for future approval.

Draft Attendance Policy – postponed for future meeting due to time restraints

Umo ho Nation Monitoring Visit – postponed for future meeting due to time restraints

MOU between Board of Trustees and NDE on Rule 11 – postponed for future meeting

SAC ARRA Proposal

Melody explained the requirements of the Early Childhood State Advisory Council proposal and the difficulties calculating the required match. The Trustees had a discussion about using the Sixpence TA and Evaluation costs as match in the State Advisory Council application.

Motion by Mel Clancy *to offer TA and evaluation expenses as match for SAC proposal, subject to legal review.* Second by Beth Schuler. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler. No opposition.

Motion by Beth *to authorize the Board chair to send a letter of support for the SAC proposal.* Second by Mel Clancy. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Mel Clancy, Jessie Rasmussen, Beth Schuler, Melody Hobson. No opposition.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be Wednesday, July 14, 2010, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation office, 2nd floor conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.



**Nebraska Early Childhood Education Endowment
Board of Trustees
March 10, 2010
Minutes**

I. MEETING OPENING

The meeting of the Sixpence Board of Trustees was called to order at 1:05 p.m. on March 10, 2010, at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCFF), 215 Centennial Mall South, 2nd floor conference room, Lincoln.

Members present: Melody Hobson (representing the Commissioner of Education), Mel Clancy, Todd Reckling (representing the CEO of NDHHS), Helen Raikes, Beth Schuler, and Jessie Rasmussen.

Also in attendance: Carol Fichter, Martha Nash, Joan Luebbers, and Greg Prochaska from NDE; Amy Bunnell from DHHS; and Kathleen Feller, Mike Timmins, and Becky Veak (meeting recorder) from NCFF.

Jessie Rasmussen, Chair, opened the meeting and noted the Open Meetings Act information was posted inside the room.

A motion was made by Mel Clancy and seconded by Beth Schuler to approve the minutes from the November 24, 2009 meeting. Roll call vote. Voting yes: Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Helen Raikes, Beth Schuler, and Jessie Rasmussen. No opposition.

II. MANAGEMENT OF GRANT FUNDS

Review Endowment (Public and Private) Financials

Greg Prochaska presented the overall financials from the Endowment Cash Fund, and it appears the market is beginning to turn around. The projected available cash balance on June 30, 2010, after all obligated disbursements have been made, will be \$1,081.21. The trustees made an earlier decision not to add new programs in July 2010, but they will continue to watch the fund as public distributions from the third and fourth quarter of 2009 and a private distribution is made throughout this year.

Mike Timmins reported on the private investment, and the private endowment provider will be investing a portion of the private dollars with a second investment firm to diversify funding and mitigate potential losses.

III. ENDOWMENT ADMINISTRATION

Enrollment Update

Kathleen reported that Sixpence programs are currently at or above enrollment numbers with a total of 291 children enrolled as of March 9, 2010. Seventy-one children have exited the programs since September 1, 2009 for various reasons, all of which are being tracked and will be reported on at the end of the grant year.

Early Learning Guideline Equivalencies

The Trustees discussed allowing programs to meet certain training requirements in the quality indicators by showing they have had alternative training(s) that would serve as an “equivalency”. In addition, they discussed whether the equivalency would have to be authorized by them or if technical assistance staff could provide authorization.

A motion was made by Helen Raikes and seconded by Beth Schuler to *move that procedural aspects of determining equivalencies would be the responsibility of Kathleen Feller and the technical assistance team and, periodically, a list of programs requesting equivalencies would be brought to the Board of Trustees for formal approval.* Voting yes: Melody Hobson, Mel Clancy, Todd Reckling, Helen Raikes, Jessie Rasmussen and Beth Schuler. No opposition.

Kathleen was asked to bring the current process that is in place to determine equivalencies to the May Board of Trustees meeting.

Rule 11 and Authority for Birth to Three

NDE’s Rule 11, the rule that governs early childhood programs, has been opened for revision. The issue up for discussion was that of 0-3 programs and services and how and/or if they should be reflected within Rule 11. Two overall issues were: 1) the approval process for school districts; and 2) the authority to award grants and/or discontinue grants – and to make sure these two processes do not conflict within the Rule.

All trustees agreed their authority is to approve Endowment grant awards and to approve continuation and/or discontinuation of a program receiving funds under the Endowment. They also agreed that NDE has the authority to approve school districts to operate an early childhood program. The conflict could arise in the event a school district has been awarded an Endowment grant but has not met the annual approval process as a school district.

Other issues are in direct conflict with one another concerning the Endowment requirements and Rule 11 requirements such as teacher qualifications, home visitor definition and requirements. A pending issue for further discussion is the distinction between home visitations when performed as a primary service in a home-based program vs. a supplementary service in a center-based program.

After much discussion, the Board of Trustees will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NDE that will serve as compliance throughout the process of Rule revision. A draft MOU will be brought to the May meeting

Attendance Expectation

Kathleen reviewed the issue of non-attendance by some who are enrolled in Sixpence programs; at times some programs are seeing a 40-60% average attendance rate. The trustees discussed how the lack of attendance affects the evaluation results concerning both program and child outcomes, and believed they wanted to maintain a high standard and expectation of a preferred attendance level.

The trustees asked Kathleen to bring a draft policy to the May meeting that outlines their expectation on attendance.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 12, 2010 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation office, 2nd floor conference room. Agenda items may include: 1) State Investment Council; 2) draft contract for evaluation; 3) policy on expectation for program attendance; 4) Memorandum of Understanding between Board of Trustees and NDE on Rule 11; 5) Further discussion of Home Visitation distinction – Primary Service in a Home-Based Environment vs. Supplementary Service in a Center-Based Environment; 6) Review the process for determining what meets an “equivalency” for training requirements.