

**Early Childhood Advisory Councils
Conference Call
John Snow, Inc.
Moderator: (Dena Green)
December 10, 2009
2:00 p.m. CT**

Operator: Good afternoon, my name is (Sierra) and I will be your conference operator today. At this time, I would like to welcome everyone to the update on Early Childhood Advisory Council conference call. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise.

After the presenter's remarks there will be a question-and-answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time simply press star followed by the number one on your telephone keypad. If you would like to withdraw your question press the pound key.

I would now like to turn the call over to your host, Ms. (Dena Green), ma'am you may begin.

(Dena Green): Thank you. Greetings and welcome everyone. As you know I'm (Dena Green) one of the project officers for the State Early Childhood (Confidence) Assistance Program.

Today, we sponsoring the second in or the second of our technical assistance Webcast in response to many of your questions and inquiries in regards to the Early Childhood Advisory Council also called the State Advisory Council.

If you look at your agenda you see we hopefully have many or if not the important players in terms of people that you'd want to ask questions that includes Rachel Demma of the National Governors Association. And we also have two stellar ECCS program coordinators. We chose these two

coorDenators because I know that in different states we have different experiences. Bob Frawley will tell you about what it's been like in New York. And Mary Lacasse will tell you what it's been like in Maryland.

In New York, you'll find that (Bob Farley's) experience is different in that he served as the childcare health consultant, I think, (Bob), prior to be involved with ECCS. And he has both roles you know since the council were established. Wherein, (Mary) has had the experience of collaborating with partners that she had all ready been collaborating with. So she has a different experience. So we have two different state experiences for you to ask questions and refer to.

In addition to the speakers that you see on the agenda, we've also invited Carmen Bovell of the Office of Head Start who is now acting in the capacity of the project officer for the State Advisory Council at the federal level. And she is available to answer any of your questions – any of your general questions I should say in regards to the state application.

I will now turn the call over to Frances who will moderate the rest of the call. And I think she'll also give you some housekeeping information about the question-and-answer or comment section. Frances.

Frances Marshman: Hi, (Dena), thank you very much. Hello, everybody. It's Frances Marshman at John Snow Inc, otherwise known as JSI in Boston, joined by colleagues in our JSI offices in Atlanta and Denver as well as here in Boston with me. And first and foremost thank you so much for joining the call today. I know this has been a week of especially juicy, interesting conference calls being offered to all of you. I know right now there's one being held by Family Voices on H1N1. And I know yesterday one of our speakers today Bob Frawley was part of a project thrive call. So thank you for carving out this hour-and-a-half. Thank you also in advance to our speakers for agreeing to be here today.

The routine will be the same as the call for those of you who attended on October 22. So you are on mute for now but will have the opportunity to ask questions during this call.

I think without further ado I'm just going to go ahead and introduce our first speaker who is Rachel Demma currently a senior policy analyst at the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and she's going to give you an overview of Early Childhood Advisory Council, what's been put into place, what's to look forward to. And then we will as (Dena) said go on to hear from both Bob Frawley and Mary Lacasse two ECCS grantees working on council development and further establishment of those councils now.

So thank you Rachel.

Rachel Demma: Thanks, Frances. I am as Frances said just going to give a brief overview of the council's themselves and then talk about some trends that we are seeing throughout the states around their development. I hope that this information is not too redundant. I know there have been a lot of conference calls on the councils themselves, lately. Many of you may have heard the NWLC and Class conference call on the councils. So I apologize if this information is redundant to that.

And also, I think, an FAQ on the council's was distributed to you all in advance of this call and that's an FAQ that the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices distributed earlier this year after the money for the councils was released through the ARA. So with those apologies, I will dive in here.

The councils were called for by the 2007 Improving Head Start Act, the reauthorization of the Head Start Program in order to coordinate services and bridge programs that serve children ages birth through five in states. And this past spring the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided \$100 million in one time competitive grant funding to governor's offices directly to support the councils.

The councils were essentially given seven charges in the original legislation under the reauthorization. And very briefly those were to address issues of access, particularly access among special populations of young children to develop recommendations for a unified data system. To develop

recommendations for a professional development system that addresses recruitment, retention and ongoing professional support for professionals throughout the continuum of programs and services serving children ages birth to five in states. To address early learning – state early learning standards. And to conduct a periodic state and needs assessment on the quality and availability of early childhood programs in the state. I believe that's seven. I apologize if I've left one out please let me know.

So in 2007 after the reauthorization originally called for the councils. The NGA center surveyed governors offices. And in 2008 we actually awarded small grants to 12 states to support the development of councils. And just this past fall we, again, surveyed governor's offices to update our information about the status of the councils.

So the urgency of the councils was given a boost certainly by the allocation of funds through the ARA in April. And then as talk of the perspective early learning challenge fund legislation grows here in Washington, the call for states to develop these councils is also building because they are right now as the legislation stands a pre requisite for qualifying for quality pathways funding within that new federal initiative.

So I want to also spend some time identifying some of the common trends we're seeing around the country looking at some of the common challenges and the questions that are helping to define council formation. And the next people you hear from (Bob) and (Mary) will certainly illustrate many of these themes with specific state examples.

So we know from our last survey this past call that the majority of states are planning to apply for the fund through ARA. And that the designation of the councils by governors is picking up around the country. One of the stipulations through the head start reauthorization legislation is that the councils must be formally designated by the state's governor. So our survey has shown that most states are using executive order or most governors are using executive order to establish the councils. And also issuing letters that serve as public record in states.

Other mechanisms of designation are state statutes and less frequently some form of an MOU. So the states that are working to develop and implement councils now identified a number of primary supports to that work. Number one was strong leadership and support from the governor's office. Another is reliance on existing advisory structures and coordinating entities within the state to be able to springboard the formation of the councils. Inner agency cooperation was also a key support for states as well as strong public/private partnerships.

So we do know that states are, of course, encountering a number of challenges, as well probably the most striking of those is resource constraint. Even though states are receiving funds to support the work of the councils themselves there are questions about how to sustain the work of the councils past the three-year funding cycle. And how to actually fund the work of the policy implementation that would follow the recommendation making state and the guidance that the councils would provide. So certainly we're all looking towards the early learning challenge fund as a possible answer to some of those questions.

So outside of the resources issue I wanted to make note of just three other areas we're seeing that challenge states. First, and I think, particularly salient for you as ECCS coordinators is the challenge of how councils are integrating effectively with other entities in the state including the ICC, the child care coordinator council, the pre existing governor's task forces on early childhood. The list goes on. But certainly the existence of ECCS planning groups and coordinating entities is those groups in many states are playing a major role as the councils roll out. And many states are also using the foundation of ECCS work that has been accomplished over the years as the basis for defining the council's scope, the council's membership in many cases, and many other dimensions of the council's work. So they're very closely linked.

Another challenge is sustainability. And this goes just – this goes beyond just funding as an issue because it begins to impact the way that the council is able to articulate their policy goals and plan accordingly to really implement the recommendations that they are charged with developing.

There are some challenges around how councils are going to demonstrate their accountability for results. And we are hoping that some of those questions will be resolved as the application process and reward – award process moves forward.

And finally, states are struggling with the comprehensive nature of the council's composition, their scope of work and I think it's a challenge in many states to really blend health, mental health, early intervention other service and integrate those with the traditional core services that are associated with birth to five programs in states.

So I'll just close this broad brush picture of council development by mentioning that. Our survey also shows that out of the seven charges that council's were legislatively tasked with the two most prominent areas of need in terms of technical assistance and continuing learning opportunities emerge around longitudinal data system development and professional development system. So we really see states taking a strong focus on those areas.

Very quickly the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices has just extended an offer of highly targeted technical assistance around council development directly to governor's offices. And these efforts will be taking place in a small select number of states beginning in 2010 and running through the spring. I should mention that the application is due to the Office of Head Start no later than August 1, 2010. So that's the timeline there.

And then in 2010, probably midway through January we will be launching a much broader initiative that will support states in many of the areas of focus that are addressed by the perspective early learning challenge fund and that will be a technical assistance initiative structured around our policy academy process that will regularly bring together policy makers and other stakeholders in the selected states.

And you do have our FAQ all ready. We have some additional information that's available on our Website. And I'm sure there will be a way to funnel that information, my contact information to you through our hosts.

That is all that I had to share. I guess, if folks have pressing questions about the nature of the councils themselves we can address those now and then move into hearing from (Bob). Thanks.

Frances Marshman: Thank you, Rachel. I wanted to remind everybody that in order to get to ask a question please dial – hit star one on your phone and you’ll be put in the line, the question-and-answer line. And Rachel your contact information for all of our listeners is located at the bottom of the agenda. But maybe you can just tell everybody right now and I will send it out again on the listserv but the website for the National Governors Association is?

Rachel Demma: It’s NGA.org. And then you would just go to the Center for Best Practices link which is down in the bottom left hand corner and navigate there to our early childhood work.

Frances Marshman: And what I did miss and I apologize for being a bad listener but your survey was conducted earlier this fall? Is that what you said? The results ...

Rachel Demma: Yes. It was conducted in the fall of this past year so 2009.

Frances Marshman: This fall.

Rachel Demma: Yes, this fall. So all ready thinking ...

Frances Marshman: Good. So we’re up to take. That’s wonderful. We’re very current.
Operator, are there any questions on the line?

Operator: No, ma’am, not at this time.

Frances Marshman: OK. Well, thank you very much, Rachel. I think what we will do is go on to our next speaker and that is Bob Frawley. Not to upstage what he’s about to say but please note listeners that he was – his program was – (Bob Farley’s) program was discussed in the recent issue the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs the AMCHP Pulse newsletter, the October issue. So you can read in detail probably some of what (Bob) is going to talk about now.

Bob Frawley is the Deputy Director and Director of the New York State Head Start Collaboration Project at the Council on Children and Families in Rensselaer, New York. Thanks, Bob.

Bob Frawley: Well, thanks, I'm really pleased to be able to talk today. And you know I want to say that right up front that we've had some advantages in New York that you know has really helped us in terms of moving this Early Childhood Advisory Council forward.

One of the major advantages is that we do have in existence this Council on Children and Families, the agency that I work with. And that was established in 1977 to address cross systems issues. And it's essentially the original children's cabinet. It's comprised of the commissioners and directors of the state health education and human service agencies. And we have a staff of about 18 that works on issues across state agency lines.

And you know through the council we've really had this infrastructure for state agency coordination for cross – for addressing cross systems issues. And we've really become over the years kind of the locus of coordination for systems building efforts. So in addition to administering the ECCS grant we also administer the Head Start collaboration grant and that's the other hat that I wear. It's not – God only knows but nobody wants me to do child health consulting. I wouldn't have much knowledge in that area but I am the Head Start Collaboration Director.

And we also service staff. During the Spitzer administration, Spitzer/Paterson administration we've created a children's cabinet that's slightly broader than the Council on Children's Family and so we staff that as well.

So we've actually been working on building – addressing early childhood systems issues since the mid '80s. And over the years the boundaries of the systems that we've been seeking to develop you know constantly expanded. In the '80s we were focused mainly on early learning. And so our work was primarily directed at childcare, pre-K and Head Start. Beginning in '90s we developed a large inter agency effort that had an advisory group but was a state – a public/private partnership that really you know resembles what the

Early Childhood Advisory Council does today. And when we were working on that particular initiative we expanded the scope to include children with disabilities.

That initiative went on for about 5 years and then there was a change of administrations. And the new administration coming in wasn't interested as much in those issues. So we – so that initiative ended. But we continued to do work in this area. And we use the time when systems building work wasn't as popular in the governors office do to some things that I think have really prepared us for our work today.

One thing that occurred is that because they – that the State Wide Advisory Group wasn't in existence. The advocacy organization didn't really have a vehicle for addressing issues and pushing their agenda.

So what happened during the mid '90s, mid to late '90s is a very strong collaborative advocacy organization established, was established called Winning Beginning New York. And that has really served us well since then. The other thing that I think that was – that happened that was significant in terms of preparing us for creating the early childhood advisory council was the ECCS grant.

The ECCS grant really gave us the opportunity to develop a broader cross systems plan that focused not just on early learning but also then we expanded our scope to include health and mental health and family support in a much bigger way. And I think this really even though we didn't have the visibility that we've had in earlier administrations, we were able to do some work that I think really was important for moving our agenda forward.

As I said earlier when the Spitzer/Paterson administration came into office they were much more supportive of addressing early childhood issues. And in 2007 Governor Spitzer established the children's cabinet by executive order. And we begin focusing in on and enrolling all children in health insurance and implementing a state wide universal pre-K program as kind of an overall strategy for addressing building an early childhood system.

The – when the Head Start Reauthorization Act was passed we had to – we initially started thinking about when we – how we might go about meeting the requirements in the act for an Early Childhood Advisory Council. And our initial thought was that we would just designate the children’s cabinet, and then the children’s cabinet advisory board that was developed to assist it.

And – but the more we thought about the more we felt that if we’re really going to address building a comprehensive system of supports and services for young children and their families, we really needed a group that was specifically focused on that issue. So we decided that we would establish the Early Childhood Advisory Council and that it would be a subgroup of the children’s cabinet. And in that way it gave us a direct connection to the governor’s office because the children’s cabinet is shared by the director of – the deputy secretary for human services. And so we essentially report directly to her.

We – in developing it we decided that it would be a public/private partnership much like the group that we had running in the early 1900s. Because we had that strong advocacy coalition that I mentioned earlier we asked the director of that organization, Karen Schimke who’s President of the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy to be Co-Chair. And then I was appointed as the Co-Chair representing state government. So it’s essentially taking the private kind of coordinating agency, the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy and combining it with the deputy director of the agency within state government that coordinates the state health education and human service agencies.

We then began thinking about OK so what’s the membership going to look like? And so we really tried to be as broad as possible and include representation across systems. And so as a result you know we’re thinking broadly and we’ve got a large state. We’ve got a good 52 members right now.

We’ve consciously tried not to have all of the same faces. It’s really easy in our state and I’m sure it’s probably true in your state to just have people from the large city and from the capital region. And so for us a lot of groups are made up almost completely of people from Albany and New York City. And

so – but this time we really did our best to look beyond those two areas and make sure we had geographic representation. We really tried to make the group as diverse as possible.

And one of the things that is really an emphasis of our work is to bring in new and emerging leaders because we're really trying to build the – a new group of leaders that can take – keep this initiative going after some of us move on to other things.

We're using the ECCS plan as our framework for our agenda. We've got kind of a late start in implementing our ECCS plan because we completed it towards the end of the previous administration. And so we didn't want to publish it during that administration. So we waited until Spitzer/Paterson administration came on board before we published the plan and got it out there.

Despite the fact that you know we're a little late in getting it published and getting it out I think we might have been the last plan that was added on to the ECCS website. We had been working on implementing a number of our initiatives. So I would say that 80 percent of the strategies that are included in our plan and we had a good 34 strategies that 80 percent of them were in the process of being implemented.

But what remained for us were the real – the tough issues. The – so we decided in creating the early childhood advisory council that we would focus on structural issues. So we developed five work groups, financing, quality improvement, early learning workforce development because there was just a tremendous need to look at the professional development needs of people working in early childhood programs.

We have another group that's called capacity building and it's really looking at developing a family support agenda, including home visiting, parenting education. And then we have another workgroup that's focused on cross system training. So what are the skills and competencies that people – that touch the lives of young children and their families throughout the health education and human services fields you know what do they need to provide

high quality services? And how do we get them the information they need to in order to link families that they're working with to the right resources?

So that's kind of the structure for our ECAC. I guess what I would say to the other states on the phone is that I think that ECAC represents an opportunity to build that coordination infrastructure that I think is so important in your states.

I think developing an ECAC or any coordinating structure is easier and more successful when you have the strong support of someone of importance in the governor's office. I realize that's not always possible. I mean we're fortunate that we do have that support. But you know if you can obtain that support that's really important.

If you don't have that support then I think the next best thing is connecting to someone with influence with the governor's office. You know sometimes you can work through the first lady and/or a leading foundation head or a corporate leader or a legislative leader. If visibility you know sometimes there's the – you know you're working in an administration where you know your work just can't be as visible as it might be under another administration. I think you can still use the time to plan and make connections and build support for the work that you're trying to do.

So I think that there's work to do no matter what your situation is. And I think you just need to be prepared for when the stars align that allow you to move that agenda forward. I mean I think that's the lesson we learned. You know 14 years ago we had a very supportive administration and we were able to do some big things. Then we kind of had 12 years where we weren't able to do the big things. But you know now we're in a situation where despite a huge budget problem we are – we do have the support of the governor's office and we are able to kind of move our agenda forward.

I guess I would also say that it's important to build off what's there. You know I know I've talked to a number of states where they feel like they've got umpteen million advisory groups. And I think it's to the extent that you possibly can I think you need to combine those. I think the ECCS advisory

groups really provides an excellent opportunity or a group that you can build off of to create an ECAC. And I think it's just really important that the ECCS is a part of this because I think the nice thing that ECCS, I think, has done for all of the states is build this broader perspective. And I think that's really important for the success of these Early Childhood Advisory Councils.

I'm a little concerned. I mean I certainly think we're getting a little push from the early learning folks to focus just on early learning. I think you know the way the legislation is written, the Head Start Reauthorization legislation is written is really focused on early learning. And I think the early learning challenge grant seems to be focused that way too. But I do think that that broader perspective of family support and health and mental health is just really crucial. And I really encourage all of you to push that.

So I look forward to your questions. I think we're probably going to switch it over to (Mary) now and then have questions towards the end I believe.

Frances Marshman: Thank you, Bob. Yes. That's the plan. It's Frances again to introduce Mary Lacasse. She is the Program Administrator for Early Childhood Program at the Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in Baltimore. And I look forward to hearing Mary's remarks and then we'll open up the floor to ask questions of Bob and Mary about their specific experiences as well to go back to Rachel on some of the nuts and bolts. And I will remain our listeners that Carmen Bovell is also on the line from Head Start.

So without further ado here's Mary Lacasse.

Mary Lacasse: Thank you, Frances. Hello, everybody. I've given you a handout in the items that Frances sent with a few references and resources for those that are more visual learners like me.

In order to explain how we got to the Early Childhood Advisory Council I really need to give you some background. In 2001 the Center for Excellence in Government and the Annie E. Casey Foundation established the Leadership and Action Program. We call that LAP here, L-A-P. It had 40 representatives across the state leading from the middle. It meant it was not the highest level

people in the organization nor was it the lowest people in the organization. It was in the people in the middle that were either capable of making decisions or bringing the decisions back to people that could make them.

And in 2002 the Maryland legislature included a provision in a budget language for the governor's sub cabinet to complete a strategic plan for children entering school ready to learn. And those strategies would impact and improve outcomes for school readiness. This established LAP group changes course of focus and began writing that strategic plan. And hence Maryland's five year action plan for school readiness was born with six goals, 25 strategies and 106 action steps. Not an easy task.

One of these goals focused on the overarching health of young children. This later became the channel by which the ECCS executive steering committee was supported. And it also became the first step in establishing local groups in our state for early childhood. These local jurisdictions used this overarching state plan to begin writing their own specific strategies based on the needs of their individual communities. For example, Baltimore City had a what they called a B-LAP, B for Baltimore. The Southern Maryland counties in Maryland had what they called SOMA LAP Southern Maryland LAP.

So is Annie E. Casey's focus changed to local jurisdictions, the Maryland LAP members reconvened and reestablished themselves and I'm sure any of you in government are familiar with the fact that we changed names. As the Early Care and Education Committee still the original subcommittee of the governor and former – still formally chaired by Dr. Grasmick the Head of the State Department of Education.

Now, many things seem to happen simultaneously while all of this was going on. It was during this time that the entire Office of Childcare was moved from what was foster care system to the Department of Education thereby providing a very seamless stream of educational services for children birth through 12 grade. It was also during this time that we were moving forward with our five-year action agenda and early childhood mental health received legislative funding which was one of their 25 strategies in our five year action plan.

So in that plan we integrated, education, health, mental health and those core services. At this time, let me kind of give you a side bar to explain the school readiness piece. Since 2001-2002 in that school year there was a 24 percent increase in school readiness among Maryland kindergartners. We used something called the work sampling system which maybe some of you also use. It's used to assess all kindergartners in our public school system. It's not a conventional readiness test. And it's not used to place students in particular programs but designed to support student's learning in seven areas including social and personal development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, arts, fiscal development and health.

Since the 2001-2002 school year when 49 percent of children were determined fully ready to learn we are now at 73 percent of our public school children fully ready to learn in this 2008-2009 past school year.

So now we're at ECAC because we've changed our name again. We've taken the Early Care and Education Committee and we have now become the Early Childhood Advisory Council. Our members include state and local agencies, private organizations like Ready at Five, P&C Bank, non-profits like United Way and, of course, our Head Start agencies.

In 2008, we got a \$10,000 grant to leverage Maryland to establish the ECAC by executive order of the governor. To redevelop our original action plan which was the five-year action plan which is now called the three-year action plan because we have taken that and we have sort of moved it around for the next three years.

We did this all with the original group which is now called, like I said, the Early Childhood Advisory Council. This group is still chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Education. And the six original goals have been reorganized into three. Access to quality early care and education. Access to resources so families can be their child's first teacher. And access to resources to enable children to arrive school with healthy minds and bodies. This group would allow healthy to leave. And I heard Bob say prior to me saying that there really seems to be sort of a trend that health isn't as

integrated into this and that was a very large discussion at our groups. And the groups stood up and said we cannot let health go. And what was really neat was the people that were saying we can't let health disappear from this plan were not the people like me from the health department.

So we focused on the accomplishments of other groups while keeping our institutional memory something that seems to be lacking any more with the way we're losing our staff. Maryland's application is currently in draft and when it's submitted hopefully it will lead to the development of a high quality comprehensive system of early childhood education.

Now, the development of this strategic plan has really refined and increased the health of all children birth through five. And it's strengthened by the members bring. For example, we have something called local management boards. And local management boards there's one for each county in our state. And they really bring the strength of their county to the table. They bring community resources. The governor's Office for Children is our true legislative connection. The Department of Health really ensures the health of children but we still include mothers because families are a huge part of the health of these young children.

We use something called RBA which some of you may or may not be familiar with and that's results based accountability. Annie E. Casey oh so long ago taught us this particular trick. Mark Friedman is the one who developed results based accountability. And it's really a framework to look at how you get to the results you want. We continue to track and evaluate data. And for example, right now in our third goal which I think I had just read you access to resources to enable children to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies. When the group – we broke into sub groups within our large ECAC and this particular group said well you know we know what parents needs. And then after we said we all sort of looked at each other and said, but do we know what parents need? I think I know what the parents need when our one county is 31 miles long and doesn't have public transportation so transportation must be the problem. However, is it?

So we are currently in the process of collecting because we all ready had the resources there we just really need to collect it. All of the information, all of the parents surveys from WIC, from Medicaid, from early childhood centers that have done surveys, from what we (Judy) centers which is a lot like a Head Start center. We've taken them from Head Start centers. We've had focus groups through some of our health departments and we're really looking at any trends that we see for when we do parent surveys what parents really need.

So I guess the message I would like to send to people is that collaboration is key but it's not always easy at first. You know when you look at this we've been doing this almost nine years, almost 10 years and you have your aha moments, after you work hard it. At first you're like really I don't know if I can work with these people all of the time. It's very hard. The state health people don't really understand, the state education people but when we all work together we all want the same thing and that's the health of children.

And I've got a good example of that in the Maryland State Department of Education there's some wonderful people we've worked with. And I kept saying to them if I only knew how sick kids were when they came to kindergarten. I just don't know, I don't know, I don't know. And they looked at me one day and they said you know we collect this data why don't I share it with you? And that was the very aha moment that wow, they all ready collect the stuff. There wasn't a reason for us to go ahead and do it and we became partners in sharing that information.

And the other key message that I have is the low cost – we call it low cost, no cost. I'm sure everybody has a different name for it but things that don't cost a lot of money often take the most effort. But it's in this particular economy very important to do. And a for example would be you know giving your time in kind to help another organization write a grant because you know a piece of that.

So we've been doing an awful lot of that. We've been working on an awful lot of grants. And we've been reading a lot of each other's grants and really

trying to partner. So with that said that's about all I have. And I'm going to turn it back over to Frances.

Frances Marshman: Thank you, Mary. That was great. All three presentations were great. And I'd like to open the floor for questions, answers, and comments. I did want to point to – so again as a reminder to listeners if you hit star one on your phone you'll be put in the queue. But before we take our first question or comment I did want to remind listeners that Bob Frawley's summary, three-page summary of the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council was included in the couple of e-mails that I sent out to all of you along with the agenda. And the frequently asked questions from the National Governors Association that Rachel Demma referred to, as well as Mary's fact sheet that she's been referring to during her remarks.

(Tiara), are there any questions or comments waiting to be made?

Operator: You do have a response from the line of (Sandra Potter Marcord).

Frances Marshman: Hi, welcome. And I would appreciate it if all callers could your name as well as where you're calling from please. (Sandra). Are you there?

(Sandra Potter Marcord): Hello? Yes, can you hear me?

Frances Marshman: Now, we can. Great.

(Sandra Potter Marcord): Sorry. This is (Sandra Potter Marcord) and I'm calling from Oregon. And I just ahead a question of Bob Frawley if he was able to identify the most successful interagency cross system collaborative that they were successfully able to execute as part of their strategies. That would be really helpful.

Bob Frawley: Well, I guess I mean we only started May 15. So we don't have a lot of successes right now. Probably maybe our biggest success is about a month or so ago as we decided that it was really important that we spent a couple of days together to make sure that we were all on board as team and had the same vision and were able to really articulate what that vision is and

committed to achieving it. And so we had a retreat recently that was supported through the build initiative that I think was really successful.

The other thing that we've managed to do recently is we've – one of our workgroups the quality improvement is a lot of their work has been focused on right now. It will be later focused on family support and health issues but right now it's focused on getting a quality rating system for early childhood programs off the ground. And we've now we've just recently launched a pilot study of that quality rating system in 13 communities across the state. So I think that may stand out as one of our big achievements.

(Sandra Potter Marcord): Thanks very much.

Operator: Your next response is from (Shirley Pitts).

Frances Marshman: Hi. Is that (Shirley Pitts) in Alaska?

(Shirley Pitts): Yes, this is (Shirley Pitts) in Alaska.

Frances Marshman: How are you?

(Shirley Pitts): Good, thank you. My question is for Maryland. And I was curious about the data that you've been collecting, whether you put that into some sort of children's report card? Or is there some place where we can look at the indicators that you're tracking?

Mary Lacasse: Hello, (Shirley), thanks for asking. We actually were talking about Alaska last night when I was taking a group of young women to basketball practice. And they wanted to know if they played basketball in Alaska because it's dark out there.

(Shirley Pitts): It's a big sport.

Mary Lacasse: The information sheet that came with your attachment actually has resources on it and these are links and they're simply alphabetical. And the one link that's going to help you a lot with the data we collect would be under S for school readiness report. This gives you the reports from 2001 all the way

through 2009 of the data we've collected on children and their ability to be ready to enter school.

And then the other report for E is ECAC, ECAC report. And that gives you the three-year action plan that I spoke about. And it talks about – what we had to do was we really had to kind of look at data. What did we have? What did we need? What can tell our story? What are the data trend lines? So I'm pulling this out to see specifically if I can help you.

For example, in health, we looked at asthma hospitalizations. We looked at school immunizations and the trend. ADD. Emergency room visits. Low birth weights. We also have the data from school readiness as well in this particular report. So does that give you an idea of the kind of data we collect?

(Shirley Pitts): It does. Thank you.

Mary Lacasse: Sure.

Frances Marshman: Operator, is there another call?

Operator: There are no further questions.

Frances Marshman: No further questions right now. Well, Bob, I was hoping maybe you could clarify something for me. I think I just may have misheard but my understanding is that the Council on Children and Families has 18 on staff, is that correct?

Bob Frawley: That's right.

Frances Marshman: But the number 52 you quoted was referring to the number of members of your advisory council is that right?

Bob Frawley: That's right.

OKFrances Marshman: And would you be able to tell our listeners a little bit more about how you came to that number of 52 and how you sort of combined a diverse group of people to meet regularly or how that's going so far?

Bob Frawley: Well, I think I guess we went about it a couple of different ways. First off, we identified which were the state agencies and which offices within states agencies did we need to be involved. And, again, this is a sub group of the children's cabinet. So essentially through the cabinet's cabinet we have all of the commissioners. We have the high level people engaged at the cabinet level. And then the Early Childhood Advisory Council members the representatives from state agencies are I don't know what level they are but you know they're senior staff within the state agency.

So we have the childcare administer and the director of the universal pre kindergarten program and the person who's head of policy for in the pre school special ed program. And we have somebody from cultural education. And you know people from OMH and from the health department and the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. So we have nine members that are representing state agencies.

Then I think for the rest of the membership we really sat down and thought about well you know who do we need to have involved in terms of early learning. And who do we need to have involved – and so we have a number of people that represent childcare and Head Start and pre K and childcare resource and referral programs and so forth.

Then we started thinking about well OK so what about health, who do we need to have involved there? So we have, I think, three pediatricians. And then a number of – a couple of other healthcare provider people, one that is – represents our association of state health care directors. And another that runs a comprehensive health clinic on Long Island.

We wanted to have good involvement of home visiting programs. So we have people representing home visiting programs both early Head Start and also parent child home program. We have members that represent mental health and child welfare. And then we have a number of people that represent the higher education community. And then interlaced amongst this are people that represent advocacy organizations. We have a few unions that are represented. And I'm trying to think if there's any other component group.

We're – we have what – we have foundations involved and also a representative from the National Center for Children and Poverty.

The – I guess the area that we haven't yet figured out is we were looking to add a couple of parents. We haven't yet added any parents. And I think what we're starting to think about now is maybe forming a parent advisory group that would work with the ECAC. And be something that would be a lot more comfortable for a parent to be involved in. So those are the kinds of people that we've included.

Frances Marshman: That's great. Thank you for that comprehensive answer. My only other question is I know you mentioned or I believe you mentioned, it's certainly on the first page of your summary that your first meeting was held on May 15. How often do you try – do all 52 members ...

Bob Frawley: We're meeting about quarterly. And then the worked groups are meeting monthly mainly through conference calls. And then as I said we in addition to having a quarterly meeting during the fall we held a two-day retreat.

Frances Marshman: OK. Great, thank you. Operator...

(Dena Green): Hello, Frances?

Frances Marshman: Yes.

(Dena Green): This is (Dena). I'd like to ask a question of the general participants. I thank Rachel, Bob and Mary for giving a really comprehensive overview of what's going on in the nation and in the states. And I'm wondering because you know we recently completed this chart to depict what was going on in the states and I noticed that some grantees are having some challenges in getting involved.

And haven't had the kind of – haven't been able to make the kind of contributions that the two presenters just spoke of Bob and Mary. So I was interested in knowing if there was someone on the line who has not had a similar kind of experience as what we've heard. If they wanted to share with us some of the challenges that might have occurred in terms of trying to either

partner or build a bridge. And hopefully that's not occurring because in the state teams you know essentially the advisory council people should have or in some way have been working with the state team prior to this initiative coming up.

But just in case I'd like to hear what other states' experiences might have been. If there's anyone that's interested in sharing.

Operator: You have a response from (Margo Chappell).

Frances Marshman: Hi, (Margo). Remind everybody please what state you're calling from?

(Margo Chappell):Hi there. This is (Margo Chappell) in Nevada. And I don't know that I would say we've had so much of challenge as much as I think in some ways it's been easier for us because we didn't have a lot of infrastructure all ready established and people are looking to this council as drawing together the siloed service sectors such as childcare.

I actually just did a kind of a graphic that – and that was a real challenge for me because I'm not an artistic person at all but I just recently sent it out. We had a meeting yesterday morning where I was telling people about it. Our Early Childhood Advisory Council hasn't met yet but the governor has signed the executive order establishing it and the letters of appointment have gone out to the majority of members. It will be 13 members large. And there are three members remaining that have not been appointed yet and they are a parent, a business representative and a representative from a childcare association.

And so my plan is that when we meet January 20 which is our first meeting that we will develop – one of our first tasks will be to develop a way to appoint those three folks. Because in our planning what we had decided was that those members would be nominated by local Early Childhood Advisory Councils but those also don't exist yet although we have funding for them and we're – hopefully they will start to exist in the first part of 2010. So we're working towards that. And I think that's probably all I wanted to tell you about that.

(Dena Green): Well, thanks (Margo) because I said challenges but I'm also interested in other success stories or other people's experiences in general if they wanted to share.

(Margo Chappell): Thank you.

(Dena Green): Thank you, (Margo).

Operator: And there are no further responses. I'm sorry. We do have a response from the line of (Cheryl Masset Morris) from North Dakota.

Frances Marshman: Hi. I just heard the North Dakota part. Who's on the line please?

Operator: (Cheryl Masset Morris).

Frances Marshman: Hi, (Cheryl).

Operator: (Cheryl), your line is open.

Frances Marshman: Hi, (Cheryl). Someone calling from North Dakota. Maybe we lost her operator.

Operator: OK. There's no response from that line and there are no further questions.

Frances Marshman: I – this is Frances Marshman again. I had another question if that's OK with everybody. I was hoping that Mary could elaborate a little bit on what you meant by local management boards and how they fit into the membership of your Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Mary Lacasse: Sure. You have to start with the governor's office for children which is a state appointed agency. In the governor's office for children they have many responsibilities one of which is overseeing local management boards. Local management boards sit on the local board of every county. In Maryland, we have 24 counties. So there is one board for each of those counties.

They make decisions for their county based on the educational needs of the children in that county. Local management boards work early childhood through 12th grade. Some counties think that maybe there's more of an issue

with school care, or maybe there's more of an issue with high school or maybe there's more of an issue with early childhood. So the funding dollars that these local management boards get go to different pieces. And many of those local management boards know – have realized, I guess, that early childhood obviously the investment in early childhood is going to help that investment in high school.

So they sit on these councils within each county and then they will report – and not every single county but then their representatives who would come to the ECAC meeting. And they would bring pieces of information like we've decided to put money into XY&Z. Or we are supporting a program in our county that does blah, blah, blah. Does that make it any clearer? It may not. And I may be able to pull some ...

Frances Marshman: No, that was great. You made it much clearer. Thank you very much.

Mary Lacasse: Sure.

Frances Marshman: And also Rachel, I have a question for you. At the end of your remarks, you referred to an application for targeted TA available to advisory councils but that's forth coming. Is that – did I understand that correctly?

Rachel Demma: Well, there are two opportunities that the NGA center has. One of them, unfortunately, just closed for states. So we're in the process right now of selecting states and that's for that targeted technical assistance directly to support the work of the councils.

And then in the new year we will be launching a broader initiative where it's actually a two-year much deeper program of technical assistance to states around many of the key components that the early learning challenge fund focuses on. One of those will be governance. So there will be some connection to the councils but that is not yet available.

Frances Marshman: OK. Thank you very much. Are there any other people in the Q&A line operator?

Operator: You response from (Melissa Courts) from Ohio.

Frances Marshman: Thank you, hi.

(Melissa Courts): Hi. This is (Melissa Courts). And I have a question for both Bob and Mary. And I'm just curious if your states have a universal child identifier for longitudinal data collection? And if you do how you made it through that process? Thanks.

Mary Lacasse: Bob, you want to start? Or you want me to start?

Bob Frawley: Well, I mean you actually have something so maybe you ought to start. You can start with the good news and I'll end with the bad news or whichever way.

Mary Lacasse: Well, it's unique news, I guess. One of the things that when I was speaking about data earlier on it's like wow this is really great. These children are doing better. We are – wow I wonder what is going to happen with these kids once they hit third grade? Well, let's take a look.

So we also have an I'm sure again your states have – some of your states have these as well and ours is called the MSA which is the Maryland School Assessment which we have in third and fourth grade. And then we have a high school assessment. So we want to be able to actually track these kids and how they did in kindergarten all the way through. And in order to do we can't because we didn't have a number.

So the Maryland State Department of Education got together and said you know what once the child enters the public school system they will get this unique identifier. So this is the first year we're doing this. It happens in – when they enter the public school system. So if we have a pre school program. If the child is in a public pre school program they will get that unique identifier this year. If they don't start until kindergarten that's when they'll get it whenever they enter the system. So it doesn't matter what county they move to they'll still have the identifier.

The challenge with that is if we want to look at other things as well maybe those chronic health conditions I was talking about earlier or if we want to

look at – if the child was in infants and toddlers prior to coming into school we're still having some challenges with that part. But we've got part of it down.

Rachel Demma: Mary, could I ask a follow up question? This is Rachel.

Mary Lacasse: Sure.

Rachel Demma: Does that extend to childcare? Because now childcare is under your Department of Education?

Mary Lacasse: It extends to all public pre school programs. So if you are a private child care center, if you are a Head Start center it does not apply to you. That's one of our challenges we're currently working on. We figured we got a little bit of it, we can ask for more every year.

Rachel Demma: Right.

Carmen Bovell: Mary, however Head Start kids enrolled in public systems do have that number.

Mary Lacasse: That is correct.

Bob Frawley: So in New York, we don't have a birth to 12 tracking system. We're working on developing an early childhood data system. Our state Department of Education had a longitudinal tracking system that is under development. And they are looking at developing it in a way so that there's inner system interoperability with not just us but also child welfare and juvenile justice and Department of Labor and so forth.

So I think were beginning to build the infrastructure so that we could have such a system. And you know one of the things that we'll be focused on doing with some of our AC money will be to move the development of that early childhood data system forward. And certainly we're hoping and have our fingers crossed that the early learning challenge grant passes and that we can submit a successful proposal because we would see that as some of the financing that we would need to develop a system. So we – you know we

hope to develop a data system that will track children birth through high school and beyond.

(Melissa Courts): Great. Thank you.

Operator: Your next response is from (Sandra Sansiola) from North Carolina.

Frances Marshman: Hi, it sounds like it's (Sandra Sansiola) from the National Training Institute?

(Sandra Sansiola): Yes, Frances, can you hear me?

Frances Marshman: Yes. You sound great.

(Sandra Sansiola): Thank you. I'm with the University of North Carolina. So I'm kind of on the outside of all of this. But I am very curious to understand how and Rachel you might be able to address this question as well and you talked about the challenges of integrating ECAC with ECCS and maybe Bob and Mary can talk about that as well. Because I understand ECCS but I don't understand how the two fit together.

Rachel Demma: Sure. I think that they fit together in a variety of different ways within the states. So I'm wondering maybe you could elaborate on your question a little bit more in terms of what you're getting at?

(Sandra Sansiola): Sure. Is ECAC broader than ECCS? Or as in some states it just has been renamed. Or is you know ECCS broader than ECAC. Or I just don't understand how that integration is going to happen. I don't know if that's any clearer.

Rachel Demma: I mean I can't actually probably am not as well equipped as perhaps one of our federal representatives to speak to the intent of what the ECCS grants has been.

But certainly from the interpretation of the grants I think that the Early Childhood Advisory Councils are really intended to serve as advisory bodies and be much more focused on broad system building strategies. Now, certainly ECCS is also focused on system building as the name would suggest.

But I think not from necessarily an identical governance perspective as the councils themselves. So more on the implementation, the program integration strategies. Slightly more on the ground than I think the intend of the councils is. And I don't know Carmen if you wanted to speak to that as well.

Carmen Bovell: Well, I'd just like to say that the responsibilities of the state advisory councils include recommendations for a state wide data system, state wide professional development system, state wide early learning standards and those are not responsibilities of the ECCS. They are not charged with those types of responsibilities. They are more focused on requirements set forth by MCHB, Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Bob Frawley: I guess I would just say from a state perspective that we've you know our ECCS plan was a fairly comprehensive plan that certainly included learning within that plan. So what we're doing in creating the ECAC is certainly we're focused on meeting the requirements that are in the legislation which I would is mainly focused on early learning objectives.

But our view of the system we're building is broader than just early learning. So we've you know as I said in my presentation at least I hope I did I mean to we've used the ECCS plan as the framework for the agenda that we're implementing through our ECAC.

Carmen Bovell: And Bob, how have you built upon the ECCS plan?

Bob Frawley: Well, we're ...

Carmen Bovell: Propose to. Can you share some...

Bob Frawley: Well, as I said, our ECCS plan was really pretty broad and it covered everything – all of the requirements that are included in the ECAC legislation. What we have done recently is we're working on kind of a visual presentation of our – of all our strategies and how they align to our goals and objectives and outcomes for children and families.

And so in doing that I've gone through the legislation and it seems you know I really felt like our ECCS plan really covered most of what was required in the

ECAC legislation but the other thing I've done is look at the criteria in the proposal for the early learning challenge grant. And there are some things in that that I would say we would have to add to our agenda if we're going to meet those criteria.

So we've you know we've – you know we need to meet on this and begin to think about what our priorities are but you know I think we're you know I think we're pretty well – by implementing our ECCS plan we're really meeting the requirements of the ECAC and we're certainly close to meeting the requirements that we need to meet for the early challenge grant.

Carmen Bovell: So Bob, this is Carmen. What you are saying is that the ECCS plan had all ready included plans to establish a cross sector professional development system for childcare, pre-K. (inaudible) system.

Bob Frawley: Definitely. Yes. And the data development system and addressing articulation issues between, you know, two-year schools and four-year colleges and universities. You know I think we've got it pretty well covered.

Carmen Bovell: That's impressive.

Mary Lacasse: And in Maryland – hi, (Sandra).

(Sandra Sansiola): Hi, Mary.

Mary Lacasse: Our Early Childhood Advisory Council looked at actually 15 state plans. That was no easy task because the joke became how many state plans can you have? We're only one state. We're not a huge state. And it was 15 separate state plans and many of them included all of the early childhood pieces.

So began to merge them into this document that has become that three-year action agenda that I talked about. And ECCS because it's infrastructure building is similar to ECAC in its infrastructure and systems. ECAC is more intense and more data requirements and data driven. But like Bob many of the things like the quality rating system those pieces were all ready in our early childhood comprehensive system plans. So they're kind of merged.

It's sort of to use a government phrase we have to write in grants all of the time, blended and braided because the components you know childcare is in ECCS. Parent education, family support those pieces are there. So it does fit. Sometimes it's a stretch, some of the health pieces but we've made it work.

(Dena Green): This is (Dena Green) also, (Sandra). That I think that's a good question. And probably for an extensive conversation except that if you remember ECCS not only sees or views our program as a state team and not a separate program and as Mary just stated you know throughout the years that we've been doing this program the number one activity of our grantees has been to form collaborations and partnerships with all partners to develop this comprehensive system.

So immediately when this legislation came out we were very careful to try to respond to grantee concerns in terms of you know what's the necessity of this program? Have we have been doing ECCS all along and we're doing similar work is that this is a potential partner. You know its crucial. I think Bob mentioned that health needs to be at the table because although this legislation seems to focus more on early care and education that's one of the ECCS components.

And we also talked in 2008 about our plans that everybody had to develop for ECCS. And certainly I could imagine on the state level you would say well we have all of these 10 million thousand plans how many plans do we need? But if people have been doing the job that they have been doing then there should be a place where you can either utilizing your ECCS plan as a jump off point or a starting point. And integrating and collaborating so that the state has one comprehensive plans for young children.

So this is really should be seen as an opportunity for you to do more in case of limited dollars and maybe there will be more dollars through this initiative. But also the idea that you have an additional partner that can do some of the early education – early care and education work that you have been struggling to do in your state.

So this fits very well in what we've been doing all along because we've always been talking about a system and not just an individual program but a comprehensive system.

(Sandra Sansiola): That's clearer. Thanks so much everyone.

(Dena Green): You're welcome.

Operator: Your next...

Frances Marshman: Operator, are there any other questions or comments?

Operator: Your next response is from (Cheryl Masset Morris) from North Dakota.

Frances Marshman: Hi, (Cheryl). It seems like we lost you a while ago. Thank you for calling back.

(Cheryl Masset Morris): That's OK. I'm sorry about that. It's just so darn cold up here I think the phone line froze up. I'm not sure. But what I was calling in earlier about was I responding to (Dena Green's) request for information from groups that may have some struggles out here.

And I guess the thing that I'm kind of coming across is that while our council members have been appointed they've not yet met. And, of course, as the ECCS program director I've you know been looking at the federal legislation and the proposed goals of the early learning councils and comparing that to ECCS programs. And knowing that there is a grant application that is due by August.

I'm just – what we're struggling with is who's responsible for writing and obtaining and administering that – the grant for the early learning councils? It just seems and I think Bob probably said it best just because of the way of the federal legislation has come out probably with some emphasis on the pre-K component, in our state since we don't have early pre-K it's become kind of a political arena and that's the agenda that the council is going to be focusing on rather than perhaps the goals that are listed in both the federal and state legislation.

And with time ticking and a grants application hanging out there that hasn't even been started kind of wondering what some states have done where that who's left that got dropped in.

(Dena Green): Maybe Carmen can respond to that?

Carmen Bovell: Yes, the letter inviting applications from states for ARA funds to establish the state advisory councils went to governors. And governors were charged with the responsibility of designating an agency or even a council all ready in existence as the state advisory council or authorizing the creation of such a council.

And so that council would as designated or created or legislated then would have the responsibility of submitting the application.

(Cheryl Masset Morris): I understand that. But I guess I'm just wondering of applications that you've seen so far is it the norm that it's like the health department or the department of public instruction or is it ...

Carmen Bovell: We don't know as yet what the governors have designed in their individual states because we have only received on application. And so I regrettably I can't speak to your question.

Rachel Demma: I can speak a little bit to that question. Hi, yes, sorry this is Rachel. I'm sorry, were you finished, Carmen?

Carmen Bovell: Yes.

Rachel Demma: OK. So that was a question we, in fact asked in our most recent survey just trying to get a sense of where these – where the authority is falling in states. And most commonly we are finding that the councils are under the auspices of a state agency. And you're right I think it's important to recognize that there are other dynamics at play. And if there's a politicization of a particular issue unfortunately that will factor into how a governor's office may funnel the work of the council.

So – but we are finding that there are a handful of states have actually or are considering sub contracting the work of the council into one of functioning public/private partnership that’s within the state. And that is an exception. But I think the majority of states are transferring the work of the council to the state agency that has oversight over early childhood which in many cases is a singular agency now.

(Dena Green): I’d like to add something to that too. Back to what we were just talking about in terms of (Sandra’s) question and ECCS complementing the work of the early learning councils?

I would encourage all ECCS coordinators that don’t yet know who or where their application is and who’s responsible for it that that would be a good activity for you to be involved in at this point. And I was under the erroneous I guess assumption that most governors knew about an ECCS program. So this would be an excellent time for you to make your work known to your governor or policymaker or whoever in terms of the work that you’ve been doing in these past five years because I think Mary mentioned that a lot of the work that you have done is some of the work that possibly the council will have to undertake and there’s no reason for them to duplicate the efforts that you had all ready completed. So you are now in the position to be an asset to the early learning council for those who have not gotten there.

And to North Dakota I don’t know what your particular situation is but I would talk to (Joe) your project officer about that and you know talk about how to – and your TA person about how to create some visibility if you think it’s not there you know your program in your state.

Carmen Bovell: (Dena), this is Carmen. Do you know if any states or the number of states that have included the early childhood comprehensive – the ECCS administrator as a member of the council?

(Dena Green): I have that on that chart. Yes. The chart that I was keeping where I asked people to tell me what their experience was in their state. So it is on a chart that I had been keeping up based on grantee responses. But – and many of them were either a part of the council. A few of them had become the council

so there were different experiences in those states. But I can send you a copy. I thought you had one but I do have another...

Carmen Bovell: Yes, I do have it.

(Dena Green): OK.

Frances Marshman: Operator, there any additional comments or question. I know we're drawing near the end of the call?

Operator: Your next response is from (Andrea Wilks) in Indiana.

(Andrea Wilks): Hi, thank you so much. This is a piggyback question based on what we're talking about right now to Carmen. And my question, Carmen, is what role, if any do you see for the Head Start collaboration offices to play when putting together an ECAC?

Carmen Bovell: When putting together what?

(Andrea Wilks): An Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Carmen Bovell: The Congress has made a requirement that the state collaboration directors serve as members of the state advisory councils. I know that in some states that has raised some concerns about states are working through that and we know when we receive their applications for funding what decisions they have reached. But our expectation is that the state Head Start collaboration director will be a member of every state's advisory council.

And so far the application that we've received does indicate that the collab director is a member.

(Andrea Wilks): Thank you.

Frances Marshman: I think we have time for one more question or comment.

Operator: Your final response is from the line of (Regina Kanuso) from Washington.

(Regina Kanuso): ...that the early learning challenge fund really does talk about early development and health development as well as early learning. So I think it is significant and relevant to pay attention to building capacity in terms of understanding and how the screenings and referrals and provision of services related to health, mental health and disability and family support for children. That is actually written into the bill.

So it's not strictly early learning. It really is more comprehensive than that.

Frances Marshman: Thank you, (Regina). Could you remind our listeners where you're calling from please?

(Regina Kanuso): Washington D.C.

Frances Marshman: OK. Are you the ECCS grantee there?

(Regina Kanuso): No, I'm not.

Frances Marshman: What office are you calling from please?

(Regina Kanuso): Administration for Children and Families.

Frances Marshman: Great. OK. Thank you. Just trying to get the context of your remarks. (Dena), I think it's 4:30 on the nose, so I think we should be respectful of everybody's time. But I just wanted to give a big thank you to both our speakers as well as our listeners for this 90-minute call which is quite interesting to me. And I wonder (Dena) if you have anything you'd like to add before we bid adieu to everybody.

(Dena Green): No. I just wanted to thank everybody for being on the call. And to you know again contact either (Joe) or I and of course your TA coordinator if you have some additional questions or you need help.

Frances Marshman: There will be both a written transcript and audio same as the last time around, the last conference call circulated on the listserv by me, by Frances Marshman. So keep your eyes peeled for that probably at the beginning of next week that e-mail. And as a reminder, there is the www.nga.org website

which you can go to and Rachel, Bob and Mary's contact information is at the bottom of the agenda.

Thank you everybody so much. Take care.

(Dena Green): Thank you.

Frances Marshman: Bye-bye.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for participating. You may now disconnect.

END