

**The Finance Project
Promoting Quality in Afterschool Programs
Through State Child Care Regulations
July 12, 2007**

Operator: Good day and welcome to today's conference call titled, Promoting Quality in Afterschool Programs through State Child Care Regulations. Please be aware today's conference is being recorded. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. Later, we will conduct a question and answer session. I would now like to turn the call over to Ms. Amanda Szekely. Please go ahead, ma'am.

Amanda Szekely: Hello and welcome. Thank you for joining us for today's audio conference. My name is Amanda Szekely from the Afterschool Investments Project and I will be moderating the call today. Today we are very excited to be joined by speakers from three states. Carroll Forsch is here from South Dakota, Jim Sinnamon from Michigan, and Sue Bacon from Wyoming. Each of them will share their state's experiences in adapting child care licensing regulations so that they better promote quality in school-age care programs. If you've not already done so, I would encourage you to view our project website where you can find our speaker's bios and presentation hand-outs to follow along with. You can find a link to our website in the invitation to this audio conference.

Firstly we'll begin with a welcome and introduction from Christine Calpin, the Associate Director of the Child Care Bureau.

Christine Calpin: Thank you, Amanda. Good afternoon everyone. On behalf of the Child Care Bureau I want to welcome you to today's call. As Amanda has said, participants on today's call include the state child care administrators as well as other state staff who work on school-age care issues. And I know we're joined by other Child Care Bureau staff here in central office and in the regions. The Afterschool Investments Project which has organized and is facilitating today's call is part of the Child Care Bureau's technical assistance network and I encourage all of you to view the Child Care Bureau's website to learn more about all of our technical assistance providers.

This Afterschool Investments Project is designed to help state child care officials and their partners address the particular needs of school-aged children and programs. For approximately the last five years the project has developed a variety of written materials. They've created state profiles and they've provided terrific state-specific technical assistance in response to requests. The work has included written publications, other related technical assistance on promoting quality and afterschool programs and particularly promoting quality in programs through state child care regulations which is the topic of today's call.

A number of the states, I'm sure a number of which have joined us on today's call, have taken steps to ensure the state child care regulations address the unique characteristics of the school-age children. And I'd like to thank the state presenters for agreeing to share their experiences with us. And with that, again I welcome all of you to this call and I'd like to turn it back over to Amanda.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you, Christine. So at the Afterschool Investments Project, as Christine mentioned, one of the issues we've worked on over the years has been helping child care administrators and their partner agencies at the state level to promote the quality of school-age care. We know that state leaders from various fields including child care and education are increasingly concerned about monitoring and promoting the quality of afterschool programs and, in some cases, are working together around this goal. While there may be numerous potential strategies for states to promote school-age care quality, we want to focus today on one potential strategy which is how can state child care licensing regulations best support a baseline of quality for school-age care.

As you all know, every state has child care licensing regulations which are also referred to as health and safety requirements which aim to promote the safety of all children in regulated care settings. Regulations specify a baseline of adequate quality as determined by each state individually and as you all know, there are many benefits of child care licensing. These benefits may include the promotion of health and safety, information sharing for consumers about which programs are of high quality, the ability of the state to collect data on where children spend their time, and then to monitor ongoing quality.

Child care regulations are more typically associated with traditional child care centers or family child care providers serving younger children. However many states also license after-school programs in other settings such as schools or municipal recreation centers. As quality school-age care varies in many ways from quality early care, many states have developed standards with a specific focus on the unique needs of school-age care programs. States may do so by developing separate school-age care regulations, supplemental sections to their licensing regulations, or embedded requirements for school-age care programs throughout their child care regulations. As of 2005, according to the National Child Care Information Center, we know that there are 13 states that have now created separate school-age child care requirements as part of their licensing standards. We also know from our research and discussions with states however, that there are a number of challenges in developing regulations tailored to the needs of school-age care providers. I will share with you a few of the challenges that we've heard about in our research and then you will hear more about these challenges and how different states have addressed them from our speakers today.

The first challenge that we found is that states need to ensure that requirements are tailored specifically to the developmental needs of school-age children. For example, states reviewing their licensing standards may find that they could learn from best practices in the afterschool field when developing child-staff ratios and group size requirements for school-age care. In some states with separate school-age standards, states have also developed language about the type of program activities that take place in licensed programs in order to further reflect best practices in the afterschool field. For example, several states such as Alaska, Rhode Island, and South Dakota have language in their school-age care regulations about how afterschool programs should provide activities that compliment the school day and support children's emotional, social, and cognitive development.

Another challenge that states face in adapting licensing regulations for school-age care is crafting regulations flexible enough to meet the needs of varied afterschool programs. For example, school-age care providers have diverse professional backgrounds. They may not, for example, have traditional training in early education that is currently required by many child care regulations. But they may have other training such as an elementary education degree or a youth development credential. So, it's important for states to consider developing standards flexible enough to capture qualifications of staff with varied educational backgrounds.

One final challenge for states in determining which regulations should apply is determining which regulations should apply to certain programs and settings. Some states choose to exempt certain afterschool programs from all or some of their licensing requirements because a system other than the child care system is already monitoring their quality. Most notably, states have varied approaches to licensing school-based programs which may, for example, already meet physical plant requirements set by the state education agency. This is a challenging issue in many states and you will hear today about a couple of different state approaches to this issue.

In our brief on this topic called Promoting Quality in Afterschool Programs through State Child Care Regulations, we explored a number of different state strategies for adapting licensing regulations. We encourage you to review this brief which is available on our website for more detailed information on how states have adapted physical plant requirements, child to staff ratios, staff qualifications requirements, health and hygiene requirements, and program activities guidance in their licensing regulations. You also have a chart in your handouts that provides a quick guide to some of these examples.

One other topic that we explored in our research on licensing regulations was how child care licensing might be aligned with other

state strategies to promote afterschool quality. While licensing provides a baseline for quality, other state strategies support higher levels of quality. For example, licensing is often the first tier in state child care quality rating systems. Many states are currently considering how their quality rating systems can support quality in school-age care settings as well as early care settings. So adapting licensing regulations to better support school-age care in some cases might be a first step in this process. In addition, afterschool leaders in many states are working to develop cross system afterschool program quality standards that promote higher levels of quality in varied afterschool settings. State-wide afterschool networks which now exist in 32 states with support from the C.S. Mott Foundation are playing a major role in coordinating state leaders to develop afterschool quality standards in some states by participating in state networks. Child care agencies may find that they can work with other leaders to ensure that these new afterschool program standards are aligned or connected with child care licensing regulations.

So, you are now about to hear more about what adapting child care licensing regulations for a school-age program looks like on the ground. You will hear today from three states, South Dakota, Michigan and Wyoming. These three states have really considered the differences between quality early care and school-age care in a thoughtful and intentional way and worked to adapt their licensing regulations to better support school-age care programs. You will hear that South Dakota and Michigan have already adapted their licensing standards while Wyoming is just beginning the process of doing so and we'll talk to you about what that process looks like. Through these presentations, I think you will all learn a lot more about the process of changing regulations and the challenges and lessons learned that you might take into consideration if your state were to also consider adapting licensing regulations.

So with that, I would like to introduce our first speaker. Our first speaker is Carroll Forsch. Carroll is a Program Specialist with the South Dakota Division of Child Care Services. In this role, Carroll oversees the state licensing program which includes licensing for before and afterschool programs. Carroll will speak today about South Dakota's efforts in 2000 to develop separate licensing regulations for school-age care programs. Carroll?

Carroll Forsch: Good afternoon. As indicated, I will talk about what led us to developing some rules in South Dakota and what kinds of barriers or opposition we ran into in doing that. In South Dakota prior to 2000 there were very few before and after-school programs and for all kinds of reasons such as, increased funding opportunities and promotion of that type of facility, they began an increase around that time, a large increase around that time. And so we didn't have any before and after-school rules prior to 2000. So when we had a program that started within, you know, it was intentionally operating as a program for the care of children before or after-school, we licensed them under our child care center licensing regulations and those were not pertinent to school-age

programming. And so it wasn't working very well. But until we got some rules specific to that type of program, we used the child care center regulations.

In South Dakota, a before and after-school program is defined as a program that is caring for children five years of age or older and enrolled in school. So if it's a program that's caring for preschool-age children, they would meet the, and before and after-school rules, they would meet the daycare center rules. If they're just caring for children five years of age and older and enrolled in school, then they would be licensed as a before and after-school program.

Part of the reason that our daycare center regulations were not, were different than those that we needed for a before and after-school would include that we, our daycare center requirements required 20 hours of annual training. They're full time employees. We felt like a before and after-school program, these are very part time employees that 20 hours of training was probably too much for all of their staff. We also looked at director qualifications because we found a variety of ways that the before and after-school programs were being set up. Some of them had the Principal acting as the overseer of the program. Some of them had hired a person who oversaw five different schools and then had site coordinators. And we found all different kinds of set ups so we found that the director qualifications we had for daycare centers was not going to be pertinent as well in a before and after-school.

The other thing we looked at was the children's records requirements. If those children are already in school, do we really need to have them keeping children's records and doubling up on that? Another main concern was the floor plan review process was too extensive for programs in schools. They, if a school is already meeting some of the major fire and life safety requirements and health and safety requirements, did they need to go through that whole process that a daycare center goes through of having a floor plan review, et cetera.

So those are some of the things that we really looked at that were markedly different. We have requirements for ratios, for written policies, et cetera that are different from our child care center regulations but they're on the same, you know, it's just based on the age of the children. And so those were a little bit different, of course, but those other items that I mentioned, the training and the qualifications, the records and the floor plan review were the main items that were different.

So, in about 1997 our office, Child Care Services, started to really slowly set the groundwork for increasing the number of new programs and developing relationships with them. We employed a program specialist in our office whose position it was to specifically provide technical assistance to school-age programs getting started. We sent out a letter to the

ones that we knew of and to all school districts encouraging them to create partnerships first. This was all way before we talked about rules or regulations. Our governor got involved. He challenged schools to get involved in school programming. They're open. They're available. Why shouldn't the kids stay there? And he really encouraged them to do that. He also talked about school-age programming in the State of the State Address which of course creates awareness across the state as well. We had a, in March of '98 we had a governors conference on school-age care and he announced some funding availability which of course really starts people moving. And we had a couple of those funding cycles and then in August of '99 we had, we created five positions in our Early Childhood Enrichment Programs which would be similar to your R&Rs in your states. And we put specific positions in our Early Child Care Enrichment programs to support and provide technical assistance and training to our school-age programs.

In April of 2000 there was the state-wide association that was associated with NSACA, and we called it our SDSACA for South Dakota School-Age Care Alliance, was created and it got people on board. It got people involved. And then we, in August of 2000 we started a work group of people who were already involved in before and after-school programs to get together and they drafted some regulations. They talked about what should be included. And by December, they had a final draft and so those were implemented in December of 2000. So, in the meantime, it's been working. Our program specialist and our specialist in our ECE programs have been working with people about what was important to them about school-age care and what should be included in some regulations. So we got them on board and I think that was a big help to us, to make it succeed is just have them included in that whole process.

We did have opposition, of course. There were people, most of it was, if our schools are okay from eight to three, why aren't they okay from three to six? And the main issue is that we have a state fire code that says children from kindergarten to second grade cannot be on an upper or lower level. They need to be on the main level of a school. And so our schools are all built so that everything, a kindergarten through second grade student would need is all on that main level. They have the cafeteria, the library, the gymnasium and their classrooms. But when you start an afterschool program, they're going to go wherever they have space for them to go and they didn't necessarily know that they couldn't go on the second or a basement level. So, that was one of the main reasons that we kept part of the floor plan review process but we certainly didn't do the entire thing. In addition, not all before and after-school programs are located in schools. We have some located in churches and other buildings and we don't have two separate requirements for depending on where the location of the program is so.

We also have in South Dakota, no other agency that oversees health and safety in a school. They have their general maintenance

practices that take care of the garbage and the cleanliness and those kinds of things but no one else is going in to make sure that the water temperature is between 110 and 130 for the kids to wash their hands. Things like that, so. That was another reason that we felt we really needed to continue to have licensed programs.

Moving along, so on December 31st of 2000 we did create our administrative rules and they were implemented and we currently have funding support for our before and after-school programs through our office.

And I think that we have the types of things that we have for before and after-school for support, we do have a quality improvement system, the quality rating scale in some other states, is being developed. We have health and safety grants to help programs meet the licensing standards. We have grant funding for start up and maintenance of programs on a three year declining amount for a three year cycle. And we have a Move to Quality program that is encouraging obtaining a national accreditation for those programs.

The number of programs that we have grew from 69 in 1999 and we currently have over 160 licensed. Any questions?

Amanda Szekely: Thank you, Carroll. I wanted to mention that of the three states that are on this call today, South Dakota was the first one to develop licensing regulations specific to school-age programs. So, I'm wondering Carroll now that these regulations have been in place for several years, are there any lessons learned that you could share with other states about what works well or any challenges that you still face?

Carroll Forsch: You know, I wasn't involved in the process when it started way back when but every one that I've talked to throughout the process including people who were involved in that process at the state level as well as practitioners in the field tell me that taking it really slow and having the state listen to them about their concerns, talking with the people who really do the job, mattered to them. And you know, sometimes making rules it feels to them like we're doing what we think is best and we don't have a clue what really goes on. And so I think that was really important for the process.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you and I just want to mention to every one on the line that you will have an opportunity to ask questions of all of the speakers at the end of the call. But first, we're just going to move through the speakers.

So I would now like to introduce our second speaker, Jim Sinnamon. Jim is the Director of Child Day Care Licensing at the Michigan Department of Human Services. Michigan passed legislation in 2003 to adapt the way that school-age care programs in the state are licensed and then they passed legislation again in 2005 to respond to some lessons learned from the

initial legislation. So Jim will talk to us today about these two legislative changes and what Michigan has learned from this process. Jim?

James Sinnamon: Thank you, Amanda. As you indicated, we've been in the process of licensing child care and school-age programs for a number of years but as Carroll alluded to in her presentation, school districts in particular have issues with school-age licensed programs in schools because they felt licensing regulations were more stringent than the school regulations so that playgrounds that were used during the day couldn't be used in the licensed program after school. Screens on windows were required for licensed programs, not for the schools so they had to come in and retrofit screens on windows that were approved for licensed care after school. As a result of some ongoing issues like this, school districts lobbied legislators and in 2003 there was legislation passed in Michigan to allow public school programs to request an exemption from licensure.

There were some criteria involved in the request. The program had to have been licensed for at least two years by us. Within the past two years, they could not have any substantial rule violations. The program had to submit a resolution from the school board supporting the request from exemption from licensure. And the most important one at that point was that the school agreed to comply with the model standards for Out of School-Time Programs in Michigan, standards that were adapted by the Michigan State Board of Education in February 2003. So this legislation passed. The programs quickly started contacting us requesting to be exempt from licensing. The things that started to become apparent were that this applied only to public school programs. So non-public schools, private centers were not afforded the same opportunity to apply for this license exempt status.

Another problem was when a program became exempt from licensure there was no further oversight by any state agency on that program. If parents had a concern about what was going on with the center in a before and after-school program, nobody had the authority to do anything. We had to keep referring these people, the parents, to the school board because there was no other avenue to address an issue. There was confusion within the community over what types of school-age programs required licensure, which ones did not. This became more problematic when you had state paid children. Is it a program that was eligible for state payment? Was it eligible for food program monies? This became a very confusing mess.

State agencies and resource agencies also lost the ability to track how many school-age programs we did have in Michigan. We knew at the time the programs, the legislation passed how many programs we had but after that point, we just lost how many programs cared for school-aged children. They could close. They could expand their capacity. They could reduce their capacity. They didn't have to notify us because they were exempt

from licensure. And in the community there were some feelings that this exemption was really lowering the quality being provided to after school children.

So what we did in 2005 was convene a work group of licensees and other school-age advocates to address these concerns that we had then seen. We met for three or four months, from February to May of 2005 and developed the draft language that we used for the subsequent amendment to the legislation. Throughout those months that the work group met, individual members in that work group with relationships with specific law makers advocated with them for revisions to the statute. And subsequently, one of those legislators sponsored the bill and it went through very quickly in terms of time frames for legislation. It was introduced in August of 2005, passed and became effective November 2005.

Of the changes that the 2005 legislation made with the school-age programs was the criteria for programs, we tried to identify which programs didn't require licensure at all. If it was training in a specific subject: dancing, drama, music, sports, those were not requiring licensure. Programs that were primarily an incident of group athletic or social activities or organized under the supervision of an organized club or hobby didn't need to be licensed. But children had to be able to come and go at will in order for it to be a program that didn't require licensure.

What we really changed with the new legislation was that programs no longer applied to be exempt from being licensed; they applied from being exempt from licensing inspections. They still have to be licensed. They still have to complete renewal applications. They still have to comply with all the child care center rules. They have to submit an annual self-certifying statement confirming that they comply with our ongoing licensing rules and they are still subject to investigation by Licensing if there are rule violations alleged.

What we also used this group for was as a sounding board for some other regulations that we were promulgating and center rules that became effective in December of '06. So there were a number of issues raised by this school group that we addressed in rules versus this legislation, you know, director qualifications, training, use-space for child care centers that are being operated in schools and high schools.

In Michigan there were a couple of lessons that we learned from this whole process. First and foremost was we thought that by identifying programs that didn't need to be licensed, we were going to clarify and reduce the number of questions that we received from programs whether or not they needed to be licensed. But what we probably did unintentionally is provide a blueprint for programs that were trying to avoid being licensed. Well, you know, I'm a program, my kids can come and go at will. They're all five year olds and it's a program that there is, takes 20 minutes for the parents to get to but they can

come and go at will. So, that was not really what we were trying to do but by trying to identify those programs that don't have to apply for licensure, I think we probably made a mistake in that area.

The other thing that we're learning with legislation, there are a lot of pros and cons for regulating by legislation instead of by promulgated rules and policies. The ability to quickly adjust and react to problems is much more difficult when the process is placed in legislation. You don't have any wiggle room. There are no exemptions to a specific requirement and changing legislation can often be much slower and more difficult than changing policy and even changing rules through the rule promulgation process. The other thing we learned is that it's really important as Carroll indicated before too, to solicit input from as many sources and involved parties as possible. The number of diverse perspectives that we received in our work group I think in the end resulted in a greater buy in by the legislature and by all of those programs that are impacted by our legislation.

So to summarize, the 2003 initial legislation in Michigan was a response to school district concerns but it didn't look at all segments of Michigan school-age child care and as a result of that, the initial legislation addressed one issue but created more serious issues that had to be addressed in subsequent legislation. But I do think that this new legislation that went into effect in 2005 that requires all school programs to comply with Michigan's licensing rules is a good step for assuring better quality and better health and safety of the children that are in those programs. Thank you.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you, Jim. You talked today about the work group of state-wide school-age care program advocates who supported your work in changing the legislation. Can you talk a little bit more about who was involved in this group and what their role was with the Department of Human Services? And I'm wondering if based on your experience you have any recommendations for other states on how they structure input from the school-age care community?

James Sinnamon: What we included in our work group were a number of representatives from centers, school-based programs but we were also cognizant that we had to have private child care centers because they needed to be represented as did non-public school representatives. The Department of Education was involved because there is a lot of interface and the communication between the Department of Ed and all of these public schools, non-public school programs. We also brought to the table representatives of programs that did not need to be licensed, the Boys and Girls Clubs, and the YMCAs, the come and go programs. We needed to make sure that what we were doing wasn't going to impact them to the degree that they needed to be licensed because that wasn't the intent of this legislation. Michigan's R&R agency was involved. We had advocates from the Association for the Education

of Young Children in Michigan involved. But everybody that was there had some direct interest, experience, knowledge of school-age child care and had some very specific ideas on how that exemption from inspection legislation should be crafted and carried out. We had a lot of very intense discussions but I think having the number of people that we had, we had about 20 people total, probably 15 regular members that came to each meeting but I think that really helped develop some positive relationships between the licensing people and those that we regulate. And that these relationships are critical so that we can get the support down the road with this legislation, implementing this legislation and carrying out other quality initiatives for Michigan.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you, Jim. I'm now going to ask our final speaker today, Sue Bacon to share her experiences. Sue is the Administrator for the Early Childhood Division in the Wyoming Department of Family Services. And as I mentioned before, Wyoming is just now beginning the process of adapting their licensing regulations to support afterschool programs. And Sue will talk to you today about the first steps in their process.

Sue Bacon: Thank you. I always enjoy seeing how all of our states are alike in some ways but also very different. And so to maybe put some of this into perspective, it may help explain who we license. We do not license any programs that are in a school district. We also do not license any programs that are operated by a local government. A lot of our counties and towns will do a Parks and Rec type program for school-age care and we don't license those. Boys and Girls Clubs are exempt from licensing but otherwise traditionally, pretty much every school-age program is licensed in Wyoming. However, like South Dakota used to be, we just lump them in with whatever license category is appropriate, whether it's a center, we even have a (inaudible) only program that operates in a family home setting. So we license them under the appropriate category.

We first decided to move forward with looking at revising and separating out school-age rules because we saw the need. We were hearing it from our licensors in the field as far as difficulty implementing certain rules for school-age programs. We heard it from providers. And then finally, the last party that kind of brought it to our attention and it was a surprise, were Boys and Girls Clubs. They expressed an interest in becoming licensed primarily because they saw potential availability of funding if they were licensed child care as Wyoming has been exploring a quality ratings system through the legislature for the last two years.

So given all of that, we decided it was important to bring together partners who were involved in school-aged care. We included of course, licensed child care programs and because we do have school-age only care in some family settings, we they were included as well as centers. We invited every legally exempt program we could find that was operated either

through a local government, county commissioners, or a school district. We had Boys and Girls Clubs, advocacy organizations, our CCR&R, Department of Ed was a partner, 21st Century Learning Center grantees, and the state fire marshal's office also we felt was important to be included because they have some very, very strong feelings about fire safety and children wherever they are. So we convened all of these partners – time flies – I'm going to say it was back in May and we received technical assistance both from the Afterschool Investments Project and from NCCIC. And we brought these folks together to help us identify what the challenges are in the current licensing rules and they're the same challenges that, a lot of the same challenges you heard from Carroll.

Some of the things we knew. We knew that attendance records could look or might need to look very different in those kinds of programs than they do in traditional child care. Square footage requirements – we'd already heard from providers that get kids around a computer lab, for example. Do they really have to have 35 square feet per child, you know, if the activity is sedentary, could we relax the square footage? For programs that were only operating in the summer, we heard how challenging it was to get the training hour requirement. So how could we accommodate training for staff that are only working three months out of the year. Like I said, there were a lot of things we anticipated but I think we ended up with three pages of separate items, whether some of them can be addressed right now, we're kind of wading through them and trying to see what will fit and what won't fit.

What we promised the group was that we would work on a draft and that is what we're currently doing. And as soon as that is completed, our goal date is to have a very, and I say draft, document prepared for them by the first part of August that they can then review and we will reconvene the committee in September and also bring in some other partners that were identified at the last meeting to again, go over the draft, gather more comments. Depending on the outcome of that meeting and it may be, I don't know fantasy that we have, we'd kind of like to look at moving forward with a formal promulgation process by December. And we'll just have to let you know how that comes out.

As far as lessons learned, these are lessons that we've learned over the years probably like all of you. Usually they're painful lessons. But we know that if we don't have the players at the table from the very beginning, it will be an uphill battle that is potentially so painful, we're not going to be successful. So in Wyoming, we don't do anything when it comes to rules without starting first with the folks that are going to be impacted. We would rather fight the battles in a more informal setting than to have to do it through the formal rule-making process. And I guess the second piece of that is really the same. We really front-load the input from providers, any parents that we can engage in the process. In this process, it's also going to be some really new providers or partners that we're going to have to get input from. School Districts usually don't

come to our table but what we're hoping is that if we can find rules that work for school districts as well. Our licensing regulations allow for voluntary licensing and that's what we hope will be the final outcome of all of this, that the school districts will want to voluntarily participate. We're really hoping maybe Boys and Girls Clubs, the city and county-operated programs will also see this as a positive and ultimately want to get licensed.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you, Sue. I'm wondering after you've just started going through this process and after also hearing from South Dakota and Michigan's experience today, what do you see as the biggest challenges or hurdles that you expect to face in the next several months as you adapt your child care licensing regulations?

Sue Bacon: Well, there's always when you enter into any kind of rule, there is so much diversity in the different types of programs and they look so differently. What an afterschool program would look like in a school usually looks very different than what it would in a licensed for-profit or not-for-profit center. So trying to accommodate how those differences can impact the rules and finding a rule that is going to meet everyone's needs. The other challenge I think, just because of the diversity of the partners, is all of the different programs have very different rules. Our licensed programs tend to really want to focus on the health and safety aspect. When you start talking to programs that are operating in a school, the health and safety to them is just not as important as the programming and they would really love to see us have all of these mandates around, very specific mandates around curriculum and what they have to cover and all of those things where your licensed programs aren't quite on the same page. So, it's finding the point where folks can meet in the middle. Everybody may have to give away a little something but hopefully they'll gain a positive from a different area.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you, Sue. Thank you to all of our speakers for sharing information today about your experiences adapting child care regulations to better support school-age care. I think we've heard a lot today, a lot of similar themes across the different states as well as some variations on what this looks like in different states and how the process varies in different states. So I now want to give you all a chance to ask questions of our three speakers. I'm going to turn the call over to the operator who will manage a question and answer session.

Operator: Thank you. The question and answer session is conducted electronically. If you'd like to ask a question, please do so by pressing the star key followed by the digit one on your touchtone telephone. If you are using a speaker phone, please make sure your mute function is turned off to allow your signal to reach our equipment. Again, star one at this time to ask a question. We'll pause for just a moment. We do have a question from Carolyn Kueneman.

Carolyn Kueneman: May I go ahead and ask my question?

Amanda Szekely: Yes please.

Carolyn Kueneman: This is Carolyn from Salt Lake City, Utah. I work with the Department of Workforce Services, an Afterschool Programs Specialist. Utah is just now creating licensing rules for school-age programs through the Department of Health. One of the questions that often arises for programs that are school-based is with regard to the cost of a licensed, the cost of licensing, paying a base fee in our state. And then there has been I think it's a \$1.50 per child additional surcharge. So, it might be \$200 to license the program plus \$1.50 per child. For schools, many of them that operate perhaps only an hour after school with 200 or 300 children, this seems to them to be really kind of more than they could begin to budget. I wondered what the costs are in the states that have experience with licensing and if they adjusted it some way.

Jim Sinnamon: In Michigan we have a flat fee. It's not based on the number of children. There are dividing points: under 20 children, 20-50, 50-100, and 100 plus. And those have just recently gone up. Our original licensing fees now range from \$150-300 and that's a significant increase over what they were in the past. Renewal fees every two years are half that. But that is something that we've heard from schools too, that they feel that the burden of some of the fees when you have a school district with 15 or 20 schools in a district, that adds up to a lot of licensing fees.

Carroll Forsch: In South Dakota we have no cost of licensing. There is no cost to be licensed.

Sue Bacon: And in Wyoming, our licensing fee is only \$50 so we haven't heard from the programs that they're feeling like that would be a financial issue.

Carolyn Kueneman: Okay, thank you.

Operator: Again ladies and gentlemen, that's star one on your touchtone phone if you do have a question. Star one at this time, please. Currently I have no questions at this time. Actually, I just received one from David Hilyard.

David Hilyard: Yes, this is Dave Hilyard. I'm with the Delaware Afterschool Alliance. When we spoke about school programs in Michigan and in Wyoming, were they school-based programs run by the schools or were they school-based programs run by other non-profit or for-profit organizations? I was just curious and needed some clarification on that. Thank you.

Jim Sinnamon: In Michigan, we are regulating all school-age programs. The initial legislation that I discussed in 2003 addressed only those licensed programs that were in public schools, even though non-public schools, private centers have school-age care that is regulated. The new legislation allows for any program, whether it's in a school or in a private center, or in a private school to request the school-age portion of their center to be exempt from licensing inspection. And since 2005, we've exempted 289 programs out of a possible, we've got about 4,900 centers licensed. So, it's a relatively small number that have taken advantage of this exemption from licensing.

Sue Bacon: And in Wyoming, we only exempt a school-based program if the program is operated by the school. The key for us is who operates the program, so the school would have to do it. Otherwise, they are subject to licensing.

David Hilyard: Thank you.

Operator: And there are no further questions at this time.

Amanda Szekely: I'd like to ask a quick question of the speakers. I think that Sue mentioned family child care providers that are serving mostly or only school-aged children, I'm wondering if the states on the line if you have, when you have family child care providers serving school-age children whether they still are served under the standard family child care licensing regulations or if they are cases where it makes sense to serve these providers with the school-age care regulations?

Carroll Forsch: This is Carroll in South Dakota. And because we have four different types of regulation, somebody who is registered as a family child care home would meet those regulations. If they wanted to care for school-age children, that would be included in those regulations. We're not limited on the age group. It's just by type of licensure. So each one, if a daycare center serves school-age children, they would still meet the daycare center licensure regulations. A before and after-school is specific to children five years of age and older and enrolled in kindergarten. So that would be a stand-alone program meeting those requirements.

Jim Sinnamon: In Michigan, again family homes have a separate set of regulations that, birth through school-age really and there is no differentiation for a family program whether they have infants or school-age children or a combination of both except for ratio and capacity issues. It's a different license than a center and we look at that program differently.

Sue Bacon: And in Wyoming, we're still working on figuring that one out. I think our initial feeling is if a program is going to be subject to the school-age rules, their license would be specific only to caring for school-age

children regardless of the setting. So we're not ruling out that it might not occur in what we call a family child care home or a family child care center, however they could not be caring for children that were not school-age if they were subject to those rules.

Amanda Szekely: Okay, thank you. Are there any other questions?

Operator: There are no further questions in our queue.

Amanda Szekely: Just one additional question for the speakers from Afterschool Investments. We're, I think that South Dakota that you touched on what the uptake was among after school providers, how many chose to get licensed after you changed your regulations. And I guess I'm wondering for Michigan, the same question. Have you found that there's been demand for programs to become licensed after you've made your legislative changes? And then I'm also wondering for all the speakers, whether you've engaged any outreach to after school programs to encourage them to become licensed or if you have any plans to engage in outreach efforts?

Jim Sinnamon: Well – this is Jim Sinnamon in Michigan – interestingly, there was an initial surge of programs requesting to be exempt from the licensing inspections but recently we're seeing more programs calling us and saying, you know, that seemed like a good idea but we miss having licensing people come out and talk with us. And often licensing can be used as an ally when there are some issues that the staff have with the school district. Licensing can be seen as an ally to these programs so we're seeing more and more programs coming back into the licensing fold in terms of continuing to have inspections rather than being exempt from inspections.

Sue Bacon: In Wyoming, we're really hoping, like you said earlier, that this will, you know, encourage programs to enter the fray as well. We think there are a lot of positive reasons to be licensed and feel that if the rules will accommodate the differences in school-age programs that more will become licensed.

Carroll Forsch: And in South Dakota, I think that because we have a program specialist in our office, I think sometimes these programs get frustrated that school-age is lumped in with child care and they're different than child care and they want to be known. And so having a program specialist within our office helps and having specialists in our R&R system helps them with their identity. And again, it does create this sense of making them feel more important in their own right. So, I think that that has created more interest in becoming involved.

Jim Sinnamon: Another afterschool support from Michigan over the past few years and it seems to be growing every year, is a Michigan Afterschool Collaborative Conference that is sponsored by the Department of Education,

Department of Human Services and some of the school districts and we're trying to get a state-wide presence. We have a number of conferences that are geared to early childhood and school-age seems to be an afterthought. So this is a conference specifically geared to school-age programs and their needs. We're finding a lot of support for that.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you. Are there any other questions from any one on the phone today?

Operator: We do have a couple more questions. First one comes from Woodie Herlein.

Woodie Herlein: Yes, this question is directed to Jim. Jim, you mentioned in some of the specific changes made about the newly promulgated center rules that addressed specific concerns raised by the school-age work groups.

Jim Sinnamon: Yes.

Woodie Herlein: And then you mentioned something about legislation, would you if you can, recount that thought for me and what you kind of clarify what you meant?

Jim Sinnamon: The legislation that the work group was dealing with was to allow school-age programs that were licensed to request the status of exempt from licensing inspection, so they wouldn't have to be inspected every two years. But kind of concurrent with this, we were addressing new child care center regulations and the school-age section of those regulations addressed many of the concerns that prompted some of the initial legislation. School-age Program Director qualifications, we were making it difficult to find School-age Program Directors. You know, they're there before and after-school and that's it. We have Program Directors that are over two or three sites and we had a lengthy process to approve those people. We streamlined all of that in our licensing rules.

Woodie Herlein: Thank you.

Operator: And we have a question from Ruth Matthews. Miss Matthews, your line is open. Please check your mute button on your phone.

Ruth Matthews: Hi, this is Ruth.

Amanda Szekely: Hi Ruth.

Ruth Matthews: Hi. I had a question of South Dakota. I wanted clarification on what you meant by which programs were required to be licensed

and which not. And I also had a general question about the number of, anybody involving parents in the process. Two questions really.

Carroll Forsch: Okay, in South Dakota, we do have an exemption but it's very specific to a tutoring type of a program. If it's, if you have a program that is specifically geared towards tutoring, it feeds back to the child's progress in school, the child is there for the purpose of learning, more than extended day of the school, that is not required to be licensed. All other programs are required to be licensed.

Ruth Matthews: Okay.

Carroll Forsch: And as far as parents being involved in the development of the rules, is that what you were talking about?

Ruth Matthews: Right.

Carroll Forsch: I wasn't involved in that process and I'm not sure if there were parents. People that were involved in the process were parents of school-age children, but I don't know specifically if there was parents asked to join the group because they were parents, that was their role.

Ruth Matthews: Okay.

Sue Bacon: And this is Sue Bacon. As far as parent involvement, we always wish we had more. Occasionally, we can get any, do we have any specific parent involvement this time? Not yet but we're hoping to get there. It's just a very difficult population to engage during a rule-making process.

Jim Sinnamon: And I would agree with that. Michigan's experience is that parents are members of the process and of the work group but it's difficult for them to be there with any consistency.

Amanda Szekely: Thank you for all your questions. We are out of time, unfortunately. I wanted to just once again thank our three speakers for participating in the call and to all of our participants for joining us today. I encourage you again to look at our project website for more information on the Afterschool Investments Project. We would love to hear your feedback on this conference call and we encourage you to fill out an evaluation form. You will be receiving this evaluation form by email and it will also be available on our project website. And finally, as the moderator mentioned in the beginning, this call has been recorded and so if you have colleagues who missed listening in on the call today and will still be interested, they can access a transcript on our website. It will be available in the next couple of weeks. Thank you so much for joining us and have a great afternoon.

Operator: This does conclude today's conference call. We appreciate your participation. You may disconnect at this time.