

Great Start Collaborative Board

Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2011
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Present:	Pat Arter	Area Agency on Aging
	Mary Crayton-Cross	Parent
	Ella Fabel-Ryder	Child Care Resources
	Melissa Hartley	Parent
	Kevin Ivers	Berrien RESA
	Sandra Jimenez	Parent
	Carol Klukas	Berrien County Health Department
	Marti Perry	Michigan Works
	Reyna Price	Parent
	Jamie Rossow	Berrien County Council for Children
	Stefanie Sawyer	Mosaic Resource Center
	Carrie Smietanka	Department of Human Services
	Gale Sylvester-White	Riverwood Center
	Amanda Williamson	Great Start Collaborative

Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements

Introductions

Amanda Williamson announced Allegan County Great Start Collaborative is presenting “Working Together to Reduce the Impact of Trauma for Children Age 0-5” on Thursday, August 25 from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. For further information, contact Stephanie Bush at 269.673.2161.

Amanda also provided information on a Poverty Simulation Workshop presented by Van Buren Great Start Collaborative on Friday, October 7 from 9:00 am to noon. A poverty simulation is an interactive workshop to explore diversity, stereotypes and to raise awareness of the realities of poverty. For further information, contact Teresa Klan at 269.539.5222.

The Berrien County Interagency Coordinating Council and the Great Start Collaborative have discussed combining meetings into one. Many of the GSC board members also sit on BICC, which is the Berrien RESA Early On meeting, so combining the two would reduce one meeting for many. Craig Blasko from Berrien RESA would give a brief update on Early On during the GSC meetings. Carol Klukas moved to approve combining the meetings and Carrie Smietanka seconded, motion carried.

Reyna Price provided a flyer and spoke about Dravet Syndrome which her three-year old daughter, Elysa, was diagnosed with when she was two-months old. Dravet Syndrome is a rare and catastrophic form of epilepsy beginning in childhood and related conditions. Reyna encouraged spreading the word to vote everyday via Facebook and connect with the Vivint Gives Back Project. The top 10 most voted for charities could win up to \$100,000 towards research. For further information go to: <http://www.vivint.com/givesbackproject/charity/45>

Approval of May Minutes:

The May minutes were reviewed. Pat Arter moved to approve the minutes, Carol Klukas seconded, motion carried.

GSC Report & ECIC Report – Amanda Williamson

Office of Great Start – Governor Snyder signed an executive order to establish an Office of Great Start to begin on June 29th. The Office of Great Start will consolidate the state’s early childhood programs and resources into a single office within the Department of Education. The office will coordinate the 84 separate funding sources for early childhood programs that are currently spread out across various state agencies. The

Office of Child Development and Care, which is currently housed in the Department of Human Services, will be combined with the Department of Education's Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services. The Head Start Collaboration Office, also housed in DHS, will move to the new Office of Great Start as well. ECIC believe the new office should be operational by October 1. Early Childhood Investment Corporation Vice President, Joan Blough, will lead the transition.

Block Grants – In the budget, there was intent language included for early childhood block grants that would begin October 2012 and would be run through ISD's/RESA's. This would include Great Start Collaboratives, Great Start Readiness Programs and Great Parents Great Start funding. Early Childhood Investments Corporation (ECIC) will work with ISD's/RESA's and MDE to ensure an easy transition.

2nd Quarter Report – The 2nd Quarter Report (April, May & June) progress report is due to ECIC on Friday, July 29th. Amanda is currently working to complete the report and have the executive board review it and approve it before she sends it in to ECIC.

Parent Coalition Report – Melissa Church

A new Parent Liaison has been hired. Melissa Church is a mother of two young boys and is a former Lakeshore High School Social Studies teacher. Melissa was unable to attend this meeting, but if you would like to meet her prior to September's board meeting, please join us at GSPC Family Potluck on Tuesday, July 26th at 6:30 pm at Lake Charter Township Park in Bridgman. Please RSVP to Melissa at 269.983.0865 or 269.449.6556.

Partner Sharing

Stefenie Sawyer, Mosaic Resource Center Director

Stefenie Sawyer stated Mosaic Resale and Resource center is the Overflow Christian Community Development Association's (OCCDA) flagship social enterprise and connection point through job creation, education, the arts and leadership development to assist Berrien County residents in reaching their greatest potential. There are two distinct arms of Mosaic: the resale store and resource center.

The Mosaic Resale Store offers a full-retail shopping experience, at the same time it provides volunteer connection, retail training and job experience. For the community in need, they offer affordable necessities such as clothes and furniture. All donations, (money and in-kind) are distributed at the local level and remain within the Benton Harbor Community. All proceeds go back to the OCCDA and the programs of Mosaic. Donations are accepted and appreciated.

The Mosaic Resource Center provides multi-faceted community development using the arts, athletics, literacy activities and entrepreneurship as a way to engage adults and youth. A computer room will also soon be available.

Another OCCDA project is Harbor Shine which helps the community and youth to shine by using lawn care, turf maintenance and snow removal as a vehicle to engage leadership training and job creation for youth in the community. School of Hope is another project established in conjunction with Benton Harbor Area Schools and focuses on K-3 literacy.

GSC Business

Developmental Assets – The Berrien RESA Health Education Program has given the Great Start Collaborative \$3,000 to host two more Development Assets Trainings in the fall. More information will follow later.

Home Visiting Program – We did not receive funds for the expansion grant. It appears additional funds for the Home Visiting Program will be available as well as funds for the Nurse Family Partnership. The State applied for a foundation grant which would include money for Berrien and Kalamazoo Nurse Family Partnership programs. More information will follow later.

Business Summit – The Business Summit on June 28th was a great success. Over 50 people attended which included 15 board members, 5 parent members and 9 business leaders. Chemical Bank received the Great Start Champion award for their help during the book drives the past two years.

Early Childhood 0-5 Campus – The open house will be held August 18th from 1-6 pm at the Early Childhood Campus (fka: Seeley McCord). The school will house ten (10) Benton Harbor Tri County Head Start classroom, six (6) Benton Harbor Area Schools kindergarten classrooms, Early Head Start, and a Childcare Care Resource Hub where childcare providers and parents can check out materials.

Crib Exchange – ECIC has decided to help licensed care providers by buying replacement cribs for the ones that the government has labeled unsafe. The requirements to receive a new crib are: 1) the licensed care providers have to accept DHS kids; 2) have infants and toddlers in their care; 3) be in good standing with the state; 4) be in existence for at least one year. ECIC would like to host a statewide trade-in on August 27. The old cribs would need to be destroyed and recycle the metal parts. Details still need to be worked out such as should two locations (north & south) be offered? How would we get the word out to child providers? Who could we get to help? If you have any suggestions, please contact Amanda Williamson at Amanda.williamson@uwsm.org

Dental Care – this area has been a huge concern for our county. Beginning in October, a committee will be formed to explore dental clinics and to start the planning process. If you would like to be a part of this committee, please contact Amanda Williamson at Amanda.williamson@uwsm.org

Next year – a new fiscal year will begin October 1. One focus will be establishing committees that will center around priorities that have been chosen. You will be asked to join at least one committee. We will also be updating the strategic plan. If you are interested in being on the strategic plan committee, please contact Amanda Williamson at Amanda.williamson@uwsm.org.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 15, 2011 at 11:30 a.m. Berrien RESA Conference Rooms B&C.