

# Great Start Collaborative Board

## Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2010

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

### **Present:**

*Angel Ash  
Ramona Borowicz  
Sandra Jimenez  
Carol Klukas  
Amy Mitchell  
Tom Nelson  
Jane Schnell  
Jeff Siegel  
Kelley Snow  
Claudia Vescolani  
Bob Wagel  
Bonita Walters  
Cindy Wickham  
Holly Wingard*

*HIPPY  
Tri-County Head Start  
Parent  
Berrien County Health Department  
Parent  
Berrien County Trial Court  
Parent  
Berrien RESA  
Riverwood Center  
Berrien RESA  
Representative for Ron Jelinek  
Parent  
Northside Child Development Center  
Parent Liaison*

### **Approval of November Minutes:**

Claudia Vescolani made a motion to approve the November minutes. The motion was supported by Carol Klukas. Motion carried.

### **Announcements:**

Mona Borowicz gave an Early Head Start update. Early Head Start is a program for low-income infants and toddlers 0-3, pregnant women and their families. Early Head Start will have 22 center based slots at the Even Start Center in Benton Harbor through Berrien RESA; 24 home-based slots at the Parents as Teachers program through Berrien RESA; 12 home based slots serving children in foster care through Tri-County Head Start; 8 center based slots at the Coloma YWCA; and 6 pregnant moms at Capstone Family Support Center. Programs have to be up and running by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Rachel showed the "Change Everything Video."

Rachel shared the Berrien County Great Start Collaborative Facebook page and asked everyone who has a Facebook page to become a "fan."

Rachel gave a recap on the "Shop in Michigan" campaign. Rachel and Holly talked to 7 out of the 14 district's superintendents and the responses were very positive.

On December 15, Rachel and Holly went to the Early Childhood Challenge in Lansing. Berrien County GSC was 1 out of 3 recognized state-wide for their role in advocacy and Rachel and Holly were able to give a presentation on the work that has been done.

Rachel has a Letter to the Editor in the Herald Palladium, as well as an article in the Niles Star about Kids Count. She has been attending numerous meetings to present information about what the GSC is and what we have been doing. If anyone has a meeting they would like Rachel and Holly to present at, please let Rachel know.

A press release will be sent out on Monday about a study done on the economic impact of early childhood. As soon as Rachel has it, she will send it out to the board.

### **ECIC Report (Rachel Wade):**

ECIC has given funding for implementation of the strategic plan. Rachel will email the board the implementation plan.

### **Great Start Collaborative Report (Rachel Wade):**

The GSC needs a new chair and vice chair. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone, please let Rachel know.

Rachel shared data. After reviewing the data, Rachel suggested restructuring the GSC to have 2 or 3 goals and then setting up work groups to focus on those goals. Jeff Siegel suggested we focus more on 1 goal and work on it collaboratively. Rachel will send out a survey for suggestions on goals.

Rachel suggested a change of meeting schedule, to have GSC board meetings every other month and then work group meetings on the opposite months.

### **Parent Coalition Update (Holly Wingard):**

Holly discussed a bus tour that she would like to plan for the Parent Coalition, the GSC board members, legislatures and candidates to take a tour of the early childhood programs in the area. Suggestions included: Even Start, Northside, Peace Blvd YWCA, low-income housing/lead poisoned homes and a WIC office. It was also suggested that the use of the bus DVD players might be beneficial in showing a home visit.

Holly shared that she is looking for partner suggestions to host a Legislative Forum. If you have any suggestions, please contact her.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. Berrien RESA Conference Rooms B&C.