

Great Start Collaborative Board

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2010

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Present:

*Nancy Brown
Darla Campbell
Kim Celnow
Ella Fabel-Ryder
Kim Harris
Kevin Ivers
Sandra Jimenez
Jenny Miner
Amy Mitchell
Gale Sylvester
Claudia Vescolani
Bob Wagel
Bonita Walters
Amanda Williamson*

*Lakeland
Watervliet Schools
Berrien County DHS
CCR
Tri County Head Start
Bridgman Public Schools
Parent
YWCA
Parent Liaison
Riverwood Center
Berrien RESA
Representative for Senator Jelinek
Parent
Parent*

Approval of March Minutes:

Darla Campbell made a motion to approve the January minutes. The motion was supported by Nancy Brown. Motion carried.

GSC Report (Rachel Wade):

Claudia shared the details of the Project LAUNCH grant that she just submitted. The grant would be used to enhance programs that are already in existent, such as Parents as Teacher and Nurse-Family Partnership.

Rachel shared that Berrien, Cass, and Allegan GSC's did a presentation on parenting advocacy at the Challenge of Children conference. If anyone is interested, Rachel has extra handouts. She is also willing to present the material to your organization if you are interested.

Rachel handed out "The Status of Young Children in Berrien County," and the "Investing in Young Children: The First Step on the Path to Economic Prosperity in Michigan" documents that will be handed out to our legislators.

Rachel discussed the Bark, Stop, Drop, Roll training that is being shared with first responders to help them deal with pets in the homes. Rachel will be in contact with more information about possibly getting this training for Parents as Teachers, Riverwood, Head Start, and anyone else who might be interested.

Rachel and Kim discussed that the centralized number to report abuse and neglect for DHS has been backed up for a year.

ECIC Report (Rachel Wade):

Rachel shared that ECIC is hosting an Early Childhood Convention on July 14th from 5-8 in Lansing.

Rachel discussed budget updates.

Parent Coalition Update (Amy Mitchell):

Amy shared that she spent most of April attending Parents as Teacher playgroups to get to know the parents around the community and to gather signatures. The Parent Coalition also gathered signatures at YMCA Healthy Kids Day, Northside Carnival and the Head Start Fun Fair.

Amy shared that the Parent Coalition took part in the Blossomtime Youth Parade and received an honorable mention trophy.

Amy discussed that the book drive was very successful. We gathered 1350 books; 600 will be given to the Red Wagon program; 300+ to Reach out and Read through Intercare; and 100 to Nurse Family Partnership. Amy also shared that the Red Wagon distribution schedule is set. The first roll out will be June 22nd at 10:00 at Calvin Britain Elementary School. The wagons will roll each Tuesday at the same time and place for about 8 weeks. Volunteers are always welcome and if anyone would like to volunteer from the Collaborative that would be great.

Amy shared that there will be a potluck picnic on July 27th with our candidates. All Collaborative members are invited. There will be more information to follow.

Amy discussed that the next Parent Coalition meeting is taking place on June 22nd. All GSC members are always welcome to any of the meetings. At the last meeting, Rachel did advocacy training. Al Pscholka and Raine from Intercare attended the meeting.

Amy discussed that the Parent Coalition will be meeting with all candidates, hopefully multiple times, as well as hopefully putting together a candidate forum.

Old Business (Rachel Wade):

Rachel discussed the Early Childhood Bus Tour and what a success it was. Fifteen people attended and we visited Northside Child Development Center, YWCA, Intercare, Even Start, and Berrien County Council for Children.

Rachel shared information about Star Power that took place on May 19th in Lansing. 3400 people were registered and they estimated that approximately 4000 people were there. Berrien County took 40 people with over half of them being children. She then shared the Star Power PowerPoint that was put together with pictures of the event.

New Business (Rachel Wade):

Rachel discussed the community event that the GSC has talked about putting on about the economic development impact of early childhood. We are looking to hold the event in September. Details are being worked out. Van Buren ISD was discussed as an option for location if we combine with Van Buren and Cass.

Workgroup Sessions:

Rachel announced that we would be splitting up into two workgroups. One would be working on the Resource Directory and Orientation Tool and their purpose is to update, revamp and expand the current resource directory. The group needs to focus on content and what needs to go in there. Sandra Jimenez volunteered to translate the Resource Directory into Spanish. The other workgroup would be working on the Parent Café. The Parent Cafes would be three gatherings that would focus on working on the social-emotional factors of families. The group needs to identify how we want to do this and what parents we want to work with.

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 15th 11:30 a.m. Berrien RESA Conference Rooms B&C.