

Great Start Collaborative Board

Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2010

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Present:

Pat Adams

Angel Ash

Mona Borowicz

Nancy Brown

Pastor Jerry Horton

Sandra Jimenez

Kelly Keur

Charles Lawrence

Amy Mitchell

Judge Tom Nelson

Jamie Rossow

Sally Smith

Gale Sylvester-White

Claudia Vescolani

Bob Wagel

Cindy Wallis

Bonita Walters

Cindy Wickham

Curious Kids Museum

InterCare

Head Start

Lakeland Hospital

J&J's Christian Center

Parent

InterCare

Berrien County Health Department

Parent Liaison

Berrien County Trial Court

Berrien County Council for Children

InterCare

Riverwood Center

Berrien RESA

Representative for Senator Jelinek

Department of Human Services

Parent

Northside Child Development Center

Approval of September Minutes:

Bonita Walters made a motion to approve the September minutes. The motion was supported by Nancy Brown. Motion carried.

GSC & ECIC Report (Amanda Williamson):

Amanda shared that Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency is hosting their Stuff-A-Truck event this week (November 15-20) at Roger's Foodland. Please consider stopping by to donate non-perishable food and personal hygiene items.

Amanda discussed that ECIC is hosting the Great Start Business Summit on November 30th in East Lansing from 10:00am – 1:00pm. The idea is that community business members that are engaged in the Great Start Collaborative or those that we would like to engage will attend. At this time, we do not have anyone from Berrien County attending. If anyone has any thoughts as to who might be interested in attending or if any of the board members themselves would like to attend, please let Amanda know as soon as possible.

Amanda discussed the Shop in Michigan Campaign has been launched. Amanda and Amy have met with Superintendents from Lakeshore, Buchanan, Brandywine, Bridgman, St. Joseph, Benton Harbor, and Niles. They have been very receptive of the information and are willing to share it with their staff, students and parents. We are encouraging people that when they can, to shop in Michigan. We are also trying to make people in the community aware that sales tax is the primary funding source for the School Aid budget. Please consider posting or sharing the flyer with your staff members.

Amanda shared that we are still hosting the Phone Book Drive for Lory's Place. Lory's Place is a bereavement center for children and their families. Children use the phone books as a tool for dealing with anger or frustration. If any of you or your organizations/programs have phone books to donate, please let Amanda know.

Amanda shared the data report from Michigan League for Human Services. The data report itself is much larger and includes all the counties throughout Michigan. If anyone would like the full report, please let Amanda know.

Parent Coalition Update (Amy Mitchell):

Amy shared that the Parent Coalition won \$250.00 from the MSU Evaluation. The money will be donated. Options include, but are not limited to Imagination Library, Baby's Own Bed, and United Way Holiday Baskets. A decision will be made soon.

Amy discussed that the Parent Coalition had six parents read to six classrooms at Lybrook Elementary on October 21st for United Way Day of Reading.

Amy discussed that the Parent Coalition worked on their annual plan with Holly at the September meeting. During the planning, they identified their accomplishments and priorities. The Parent Coalition is most proud of the relationships they built with the legislators. Literacy remains a top priority for the coalition.

Amy shared that the Great Start Parent Coalition Potluck will be taking place on December 7th from 5:30-7:30 at Stevensville United Methodist Church. All Board members are invited. The next regular scheduled meeting will be taking place on January 25th.

Partner Sharing:

Chuck Lawrence from the Berrien County Health Department spoke to the Board about the Berrien County Lead Program. The program is looking for applications. Applications are available at www.bchdmi.org.

Gale Sylvester-White shared the Early Childhood Services flyer for in-home mental health services through Riverwood. If anyone needs copies of this flyer, please let Amanda know.

Old Business (Amanda Williamson):

Implementation Projects:

Resource Directory – the Resource Directory is almost complete. There are just a few minor changes that need to be made and we are waiting for addresses from the new legislators. The Directory will also be translated into Spanish. Once the Resource Directory is completed, Board Members will have access to them to distribute to their families.

Human Resource Childcare Packet – Amanda shared the packet with Human Resource Directors at the Southwest Michigan Human Resource Council in October. The idea is that HR Directors will give the packet to expecting families. The packet has information on Child Care Resources, steps for choosing quality child care and dealing with working parent's guilt. If anyone needs copies for your HR Directors, please let Amanda know.

Developmental Assets – Developmental Assets training will be taking place on January 21st. The location will be determined at a later date. Amanda asked for support from Board members to make sure that they will be sending employees from their organization. It was brought up that a half day workshop might be better for the participants, with a half-day follow-up workshop at a later date. This will be discussed and a decision will be made soon.

Operating Guidelines – Amanda shared that it is time to update and make changes to our Operating Guidelines. Amanda asked for thoughts or suggestions about changes that need to be made. If anyone has any changes that they would like to share, please let Amanda know. Approval of updated Operating Guidelines will take place at the January meeting.

Membership Requirements – Amanda discussed the need for new Board members. We are still not meeting the requirements for parents or business members. If anyone knows of any that might be good for our Board, please let Amanda know. We will also need to replace Ron Jelinek as our elected official, so if anyone has any suggestions for that, please let Amanda know. This does not have to be a State Rep or Senator. This can be a county commissioner, or any city/township official.

New Business (Amanda Williamson):

Amanda shared that ECIC has not released our Scope of Work for 2011. The Board discussed what priorities that we would like to work on for next year.

Amanda shared that Berrien County will be in a childcare crisis, as the YWCA is folding. All three locations will be closing within the next two weeks. At the Peace Blvd site alone, this affects 96 children. After contacting all childcare facilities in our area, there are only two locations that were accepting infants. Amanda suggested that child care be a top priority next year. Other suggestions from Board members include: dental, social-emotional, and literacy. A survey will be going out to Board members to find out where the GSC priorities should lay.

Amanda discussed that because the Scope of Work will be due on December 30th. We do not have another Board meeting. Amanda asked that the Board approve that the Executive Board make the final approval of the Scope of Work. Claudia Vescolani made a motion to approve. Tom Nelson supported the motion. Motion carried.

Next Meeting: Thursday, January 21, 11:30 a.m. Berrien RESA Conference Rooms B&C.