

Montana Head Start Association
Lewistown, MT
April 7-8, 2005

Present: Viola Wood, Mary Jane Standaert, Jennifer Granot, Renee Funk, Barb Brophy, Tom Richards, Kelley Ruffner, Patty Dahl, Kathryn McLeod, Tracey Nielson, Betty Williamson, Susan Carlson, Sherry Poitra, Judy Bryngleson, Karla Seaman, Scot Anderson, Ron Conrad, Gail Mickey, Debra Linstrand, Linda Allen, Mona Fergerson, Christy Hill Larson

Guests: Elaine Shea, Todd Lester, Vicky Greening, Mark Heinert, Melinda Edwards, Lylia Keil, Dolly ?, Ross Weaver

Viola Wood opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions. Kathryn McLeod acted as facilitator, Christy acted as recorder and timekeeper.

Child and Adult Care Food Program: Ann Hagen- Buss and Kathy Brenden presented changes in the food program. They also presented a new attendance/meal count form developed for HS/EHS programs. Scot Anderson asked for the Federal Regulation that required a time in and time out for each child. They will find the regulation and report back.

211 for Health and Human Services: Susie McIntyre presented information on the 211 Information System. It involves: Referral and Disaster Preparedness, Crisis and Data Collection for the entire State of Montana. It is making its way through the Legislature in SB 428.

Ross Weaver: Regional Office Update

- 5th year in a row that Ross has attended an Association meeting
- Reauthorization is crucial and advocacy efforts are important.
- IM on Salary compensation has been sent out
- Conference Travel
 - Head Start Bureau discourages HS dollars being spent on conferences
 - Head Start Bureau puts on Institutes and strongly encourages HS/EHS to send staff
- Permission has been given from the Bureau to award one-time dollars for the grants sent in last June.
- Expect within a short period IM on additional one time funding. Uncertain if there will be anything on program improvement money. Program improvement money seems to be drying up. No quality money this year.
- Reviews: Looking closely at enrollment, income eligibility, in-depth of fiscal viability of programs. Program Review Information is being sent to Congress. Probably next year, one person on the Review Team will look specifically at mental health systems and services.
- Self-assessment tool developed in Region I has been sent to all programs. RO is being trained on it. Region VIII has taken the position that it is not a mandated tool.
- NRS: If a classroom closes for the year before they have received NRS materials, they need to document that.

- PIR: When filling out PIR, pay attention to enrollment. If you are under 60 days of program year-end, report full enrollment, you do not have to fill empty slots if you are less than 60 days to the end of the year.
- Paying for qualified staff is difficult without quality dollars. Turnover is an issue in not being able to pay. Windy Hill has said there will be no reduction in children without a reduction in budget.

Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program: Lisa Murphy, Apprenticeship and Training Program, Early Childhood Services Bureau, DPHHS

- Lisa explained how the Early Learning Guidelines align with the Head Start Performance Standards. Training is available on ELG and the Performance Standards.
- Lisa discussed the continuation of the Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program, stipends and Merit Pay. There are ways for HS/EHS staff to tap into these programs. Contact Lisa Murphy at the Early Childhood Services Bureau, 444-1400.

Region XI American Indian TA Network: Elaine Shea shared training resources

Mark Heinert, Vicki Greening, and Lylia Keil presented information on changes in the PIR and how to use the PIR data. If you need data from the PIR contact, Vicki, Mark or Michelle Stewart-Outlaw.

Head Start/State Collaboration Project Update: Mary Jane Standaert

- She has been working with the Department and the Program Policy Committee of MECAC to figure out the cost of stabilizing child care eligibility for Head Start/Early HS children for one year. She thanked directors for returning the surveys.
- The month of March she assisted with a grant from Maternal and Child Health to create a pool of early childhood mental health consultants with Georgetown University. It has so many possibilities. While funding is a long shot, they went ahead because we needed to get the concept on paper.
- She has traveled to Denver and Washington, DC. Both meetings were very challenging and interesting. In Denver, the small state group discussions worked well. In DC she gave two presentations – one on the supplemental projects and one on her work with the Child Care Bureau in our state.
- Mary Jane has continued working with the ECCS task force. They finally have a final draft of Results and Outcomes. It appears that they are moving in the direction of information dissemination and shoring up the mental health services for young children.
- She attended the Legislative Breakfast and Head Start Day at the Capitol.
- She spent most of February gone or sick and her father passed away.
- Presented in Wolf Point on Everyday Creativity with Christy.
- Presented in Great Falls with Lisa Murphy on the Early Learning Guidelines.
- The Early Childhood Partnership for Professional Development is still trying to figure out who they are and what they can do. Sponsored by OPI and the Collaboration Project is paying for some of the meeting costs to keep it going, because there is great potential.
- She requested being on HS/EHS program's mailing lists for program newsletters.

- Update from the Early Childhood Project was handed out (mailed with these minutes)
- Resources for You:
 1. School Readiness Indicators
 2. Tiger Woods Foundation for Youth development grants
 3. Being a great Mentor booklet
- Advocacy with NHSA
- Christy added information regarding the Collaboration Project and Mental Health. She attends the System of Care Committee Meetings and chairs the Children's Committee of the MT Mental Health Association.
- Instead of accompanying Mary Jane to the Collab Director's meeting, Christy attended NHSA training in January. She and Debra Lindstrand visited the offices of Senator Burns and Senator Baucus to talk about Head Start reauthorization.

MECAC: Scot Anderson reported:

- Dr. Wynia and Governor Schweitzer attended the last MECAC meeting. The Governor spoke at MECAC. Since Schweitzer is new, we need to use this time to educate him about early childhood issues and Head Start/Early Head Start in Montana.
- Infant/Toddler initiative: The Quality Committee is identifying quality standards for care. Talking more about best practices in I/T care.
- Public Policy Committee talking about what is going on in the legislature and legislative issues.
- Program Policy Committee is discussing using a monthly rate for child care. The state now pays either hourly or daily rate. Suggested that it is difficult for providers to provide services when their income is not consistent. The monthly rate issue is working its way through the process and is being seriously considered. This committee is also discussing Head Start eligibility and child care scholarship money. The proposal now is: if a HS/EHS child is determined as eligible for state paid child care and in a full day program, and for some reason loses eligibility, but still needs full day of care, they would be eligible for one year or until the end of June and then a new cycle starts, plan includes siblings. Two Star Quality child care programs would also have the same opportunity. This was a compromise.

Region VIII T/TA Report:

- Todd Lester will be trained in self-assessment.
- Todd announced the Bozeman program trying to coordinate last week DECA training the last week of August. The training will be held in Livingston 20 slots are available for individuals outside the Bozeman program. Call Todd or Gail Smith if you are interested in attending.
- If programs are having issues with LEA agreements, Melinda and Todd would be happy to assist with LEA agreements.
- TA Plans: will start working on the second round soon.
- Leadership: Booze, Allen, Hamilton TA Specialists and ACF staff have formed a work group on Professional Leadership and Professional Development.
- Systems 101 for Staff and Management training developed

- Craig Hart is the Fatherhood Specialists. He recently has done training on the Fatherhood Initiative and is available for follow-up training.

Directors, Staff, and Parents met as groups

Committee Reports

Nominating: Kathryn McLeod reporting

Consensus was reached in selecting, Bill Hanson, from Billings, Inc., to represent the Montana Head Start Association on the MAPT Steering Committee.

Finance:

- Revisions to the approved budget: Add line items to reflect advocacy money coming in and going out.
- MAC lobbyist: Not all programs contributed to the MAC Lobbying efforts. Money to pay the lobbyist was paid with funds the programs contributed through Policy Councils and money received from the 2002 & 2003 Regional Conferences.

Donations from Head Start/Early Head Start Programs for MAC 2005 Legislative Activities

RMDC Head Start—Helena	\$ 500.00
Missoula EHS	\$ 128.00
Northern MT HS/HS—Havre	\$ 111.00
HRDC HS—Bozeman	\$ 336.00
Head Start Inc.—Billings	\$ 370.00
Central Montana HS--Lewistown	\$ 244.00
Butte Head Start	\$ 450.00
Total	\$2,139.00

Raffle income from Assoc. meetings

2004 September	\$ 91.00
2004 EC conference	\$ 48.00
2004 Dec	\$ 218.00
2005 April	\$91.00
Total	\$ 448.00

- Scot Anderson presented a check for \$4,870.00 from Head Start Inc.; they donated funds from the State early childhood conference.
- Checking Bal: \$21761.58
- Money Market Bal: \$20443.06
- Oral Health Bal: \$3148.00 (in Checking Acct)
- T/TA Literacy Fund Bal: \$987.37 (in checking acct)
- Agenda item for the next Association meeting: \$1 per/child campaign

Personnel:

Recommended a 2.5% salary increase for the Director retroactive to Feb 1, 2005.

Native American Committee: Susan Carlson Reporting

- The committee wants to clarify the way the executive director/director compensation is reported on the PIR for Tribal programs.

- Proposed a training on PIR either individual programs or a cluster training and include coordinators responsible for content
- Susan invited everyone to attend as a participant or a presenter at the NW Indian Head Start Coalition August 21st-25 in Billings. Flyers for the Conference will be distributed through the HS Assoc. and the Collaboration Project.
- The committee will continue to recruit involvement of all Tribal members by selling the advantages of participation.

T/TA: Ron Conrad reporting

The committee developed a survey and asked the Board members present to rank them according to preference. The top six topics: Mental Health, Behavior Management, On-going Monitoring, Wellness/Stress, Advocacy (Marketing), and Visual Phonics. These topics will be covered at cluster trainings in conjunction with Head Start Association meetings. The survey also asked questions about an annual “Managing for Quality” type training to take place in October during MEA/AFT Teacher’s Convention and if programs would be interested in having the Association arrange trainings and programs would pay registration fees. This could potentially raise funds for the Association and non Head Start programs could attend for a higher fee. The majority felt these were good ideas.

Governmental Affairs: Scot Anderson reporting

- HB 2: Child Care looks to be safe and funded at the level requested
- CHIP: Tobacco tax will fund more children to participate
- CHIP to limit administrative costs in House Human Services Committee: SB 154 we would support that
- Medicaid redesign to provide more money for services and would prohibit financial criteria (“assets test”) below \$15000.
- EC School Readiness bill would basically provide training for child care providers to prepare children better for Kindergarten. Died in committee.
- Children’s mental health bills that are still active:
 - Mental Health Ombudsman’s job description would be revised to include child protective services.
 - SB 499 would revise laws pertaining to the mental health system and correct the service area authority statutes; this bill includes a crisis response-planning component.
- It is likely that Legislature will adjourn early to leave money for a special session for Education.
- On national level: Congress and Reauthorization, there has been a lot of negative information reported in the press from the GAO report that portrays HS/EHS fiscal management at the local level in a negative way. There have been propaganda pieces written on reauthorization. There is a lot of information available on the NHSA website: www.nhsa.org. Congress needs to hear from Head Start particularly parents. Good news there may not be a proposal to pilot block grant money to states. Scot asked everyone to go back to programs and encourage staff and parents in their programs to advocate for Head Start.
- Scot is going to ask MAC lobbyist, Steve Yeakel for advice on how to persuade our congressional delegation to vote for Reauthorization. Don’t anticipate Steve asking for any additional fees to help HS/EHS formulate a message. Association needs to follow Reauthorization and send messages to Legislators. Scot asked Christy to get contact information for our Congressional Delegation and get it to

Association members. Mailing letters to Washington, DC sometimes takes several weeks to reach the right office. Faxes, e-mails, sending letters to their state offices, and sending letters by FedEx will get letters to Montana Senators and Representatives more quickly.

- Discussion on the agenda for next time on funding our advocacy efforts. Some Policy Councils will not be as motivated to raise funds if every PC is not contributing. See Finance Report.

Program Updates:

Program updates were not given this time, as other presentations ran over.

Dates for next three meetings: (If you have something you would like on the agenda, please let Christy know.)

September: 29th & 30th in Helena

January: 26th & 27th Bozeman

April: 6th & 7th Great Falls

Raffle: \$91.00

Meeting Evaluation:

Nice facility

Appreciate the programs attending

Clearer the needs of the programs get the better BAH can do

Great meeting

Appreciate the Lewistown people hosting the meeting.

I like the facilities, Training, very interesting

Very informative, learned a lot

Site great, Lewistown great job, presenters good, CACFP good presenting, need to do a different kind of trainings for programs. Disappointed in the attendance

As a parent thankful for the opportunities to learn about the differences in programs, would like to see more parents, learned so much. Lewistown was great.

Disappointed not more people here, this was their loss, thanks to Elaine Shea

Nice facility. Enjoyed networking

Appreciate the nametags, facilities wonderful. No snow, nice work,

Thanks to Lewistown, nice meeting, disappointed not more people here

Same comments about Lewistown

Appreciate honesty in sharing comments and troubles

Thank you for all coming, really good meeting, networking valuable, lots of good information.

Great meeting great facility

Viola closed the meeting by thanking Kathryn McLeod for facilitating, wishing everyone continued success, and safe travel and to encourage those not present to be sure and join us in the fall.