

Montana Head Start Association  
January 26, 2006  
Bozeman, MT

President Viola Wood opened the meeting with a welcome and introduction of members. Darrell Christensen facilitated the meeting and Brenda Fisher acted as timekeeper

**Present:** Mary Jane Standaert, Frank Witter, Tom Richards, Elaine Shea, Andi Everyingham, Elizabeth Reece, Anita Birdinground, Clyde Wolf Black, Viola Wood, Mary Chaboya, Terrie Stump, Susie Goffena, Debra Linstrand, Barb Brophy, Joan Davies, Patty Dahl, Leah Fortune, Peggy Rayome, Brenda Fisher, Stacey Scarborough, John Filz, Darrell Christensen, Krista McCune, Robyn Willet, Judy Bryngelson, Karla Seaman, Andrea Savage, Jeanne Christopher, Alma Young, Mona Fergerson, Shawna Hooper, Scot Anderson

**Libby Hancock**, Career Development Director for the MSU Early Childhood Project shared information about the Project, available scholarships and the practitioner registry. A requirement to participate in the practitioner registry is to be a member of a professional organization. If a HS/EHS program belongs to the National Head Start Association, the staff is also a member and that membership would satisfy the requirement. A person serving on the Montana Head Start Board would also count as belonging to a professional organization. For more information go to the Early Childhood website: <http://www.montana.edu/wwwecp/> or contact Libby Hancock at: 406-994-1992 or 1-800- 213-6310, libbyh@montana.edu.

**Program Updates:**

**Head Start Inc., Billings:** They operate in six sites located in Billings, Hardin, Red Lodge and Joliet and are funded for 307 children. They recently have discontinued a child care partnership and that has been difficult. The cost to maintain quality Head Start services in the child center became a problem. The challenge now is to bring the 26 slots into the rest of the sites. They are looking at a new structure to deliver services and are creating positions called Family Support Specialists. Each family will have one person to contact for whatever their needs are. They completed their Federal Head Start Review in November and there were no findings. The Billings Gazette had a nice article about the program because of no findings. They are challenged with increased costs. Recently, an annual fund raising letter was sent to potential donors. Across the state Wendy's employees donated money that went to some local Head Start programs. Judy was asked to share about fundraising efforts they have used in Billings. Six years ago they determined they needed to diversify their funding base. They engaged MSU-Billings school of Business to do a community survey about what Head Start meant to individuals in the community. From the survey they learned they had a lot of work to do to educate the community about Head Start and Head Start families. They did engage in a public awareness campaign that included tours of the Head Start facility to an array of members of the community. Then they started asking for money in a variety of ways. They send out a newsletter quarterly and one time a year ask for money and over the course of the six years have built a base of individual people and corporations who donate funds; some

on an annual basis. It amounts to a lot of time and effort. They recently had a Head Start bus involved in an accident, no children on the bus and the staff was not injured. Judy requested other programs to share job descriptions on positions with blended job duties and she asked how other programs dealt with and kept in touch with non- custodial parents that wanted to be involved at some level with their child.

**Opportunities Inc., Great Falls Head Start:** Their program is hosting the Family & Community Partnership staff conference this spring. It will be held March 2 & 3, 2006. Save the date postcards have been sent. The conference is being held in conjunction with a parent conference. Elizabeth Einstein is the keynote and will also do training. The theme for the conference is: Families-Beyond Surviving...Thriving. They have a strong Fatherhood program. Karla has been going out into the community and talking about financial needs of Head Start. They are discussing starting a private foundation. They are looking at piloting a summer program for children who may need extra help. It will be a transition program that will begin prior to HS or kindergarten. They still have the goal of bringing Early Head Start to Great Falls and are working at bringing the Great Falls early childhood community together and educating them about the program and let them know they are very interested. Because of an aging bus fleet and doing a cost analysis between contracting for bus service and or upgrading agency owned buses, they piloted one route with a contractor and it was successful and parents were pleased. Once a month Karla has a Director's meeting and dinner is served. It is an opportunity for anyone to join her and ask questions. They have an issue with children's behavior in the classroom. Some parents whose children do not have behavior issues are concerned about the children in the classroom that do. They are having lots of in-service around this issue and are having an intense in-service for classroom staff in the spring. Teachers are also doing a book study each month. Jeanette French an associate of Becky Bailey is working with their program. They are looking into bringing Becky Bailey to Montana to train trainers in her approach to classroom management and discipline.

**Confederated Salish and Kootenai Early Childhood Services:** Their program is in the process of educating a newly elected Tribal Council. A Special Baby Clinic was held which included tribal health and the county health department. All families were invited, including expectant couples; they did developmental screenings, took photos, and served food. They are continuing to work on curriculum development. They use the Touch Points program and are preparing for a visit from Dr. Terry Brazeleton. He has visited their program on several occasions training about one-hundred staff. They have worked on new partnerships, trying to break down turf issues between programs. They are working on building relationships with Foster Care and Ronan, Polson, and Missoula Community Hospitals. They were reviewed last April and didn't get a report and will be re-reviewed and are trying to improve their systems. Two years ago they went to Family Advocate system of working with families and delivering services. They are working really hard on training folks in Early Head Start as it is very different than Head Start. They are in need of a CDA trainer that could help insure that the staff on the way to getting their AA degrees.

**Fort Belknap Head Start:** Alma Young has been acting Director for 1 ½ years. They have three centers serving 160 children. They are preparing for a Review. It is a stressful time, waiting for a letter to come any day. They have a lot of new staff to train with a lot of training issues. They are currently under enrolled and having a difficult time with recruiting families and children. They attended a conference and HS Bureau said that under enrolled programs will lose the money. They have 70% unemployment on their Reservation. They are looking at the possibility of changing HS slots to EHS slots. There are a lot of children's behavioral issues in the classroom and teachers are not adequately trained to deal with some of the problems that come up. The program has seen an increase over the past three years of more children with ADHD. Increasing numbers of kids are being referred that need one on one and they do not have enough staff to provide the one on one service. They have a lot of collaborations between HS and the Extension Office out of MSU Bozeman, the local Housing Authority, and TANF Office. The local community college has a HS grant to provide classes for HS teachers. They have the AA degree program at the college and are working with MSU to get Bachelors via the satellite program.

**Deer Lodge County Head Start:** they have full of enrollment and have a waiting list. They have all new buses and no problems with transportation issues. They are supporting behavior by using several approaches including Good Talking Words, and sending a team to MBI training each year. They will be reviewed sometime next fall.

**Child Start Inc., Missoula:** Scot Anderson passed out a written report. They have recently completed a strategic planning process with goals established for the next three to five years. Because of a large turnover in administration staff, they have a new management development program and are doing 2 ½ hours of training each month. Their Early Learning Opportunities Act grant is concluding at the end of February. For 18 months they have presented "Families and Books" activities twice each month at four locations. They also funded a local variation of the Children as Scholars program in Missoula. They have participated in selecting the local team for the School Readiness Summit. This month they were among the first grantees to be reviewed for the HS Bureau's Early Alert program. They were required to submit information regarding: key personnel changes, negative media reports, PIR results, staff qualifications, etc. They are concerned about the number and severity of children enrolled with disabilities and challenging behaviors with the limited resources available from staff and school districts. They created family advocate positions four years ago, teachers and families like the change. Education staff are taking advantage of training from Rebecca Johns offered through the Office of Public Instruction's CSPD (Comprehensive System for Personnel Development)..

**Northern Montana Child Development Center:** Marit Ita reported on their involvement in the School Readiness Summit: NMCDC and the R & R are sharing the coordination in their area. They have recruited team members to attend the Summit including two legislators from their area. Frank reported on the results of their Review. They have addressed all of the findings and as a result a lot of good things came out of it. They are now a pre-birth to five programs and have completely reorganized their

management structure. They have one executive director. They are currently working on blending job descriptions and work plans. Funding streams are an issue, since they are two different funding streams. Funded enrollment has been an issue in the past. They looked at recruitment and public awareness and came up with new ideas and ways to recruit families. They are now fully enrolled this year.

**Central Montana Head Start:** The program is having a struggle with enrollment in Home Base and in smaller communities. It has been hard to provide HS services with the roller coaster of enrollment. They are looking for a new Health Coordinator and the position has been hard to fill with a small applicant pool. Their continuation grant is due in February. They completed a self assessment and are in an aggressive process of assigning individuals to address the needs that were identified in the assessment. They are scheduled for a review next winter. They are looking at on-going monitoring and developing tools so that every component can be monitored. They have had trainings by Todd Lester and Vickie Greening on management styles. They have good collaboration with school districts in serving children with disabilities. Transportation has taken an interesting twist since they partnered with the Council on Aging which now takes care of most of their transportation needs. They recently received a grant from Health Mothers Healthy Babies. They hired Tova Gerer and Dorothy Swanson to coordinate the grant. They submitted a request to become an MBI pilot site and are getting implemented into the program.

**Butte Head Start:** They had a Review in November and of this date have not yet received a report. They are working on 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Parent Fair with the EHS program to provide workshops for parents and community partners. HS and EHS have combined their Health Advisory Board into one. Transportation staff started a fund raising event and raised \$15,000 for child restraints. There is a concern at their program on how to get teachers to return for a Bachelors degree if they aren't going to receive in compensation for it.

**HRDC IX:** Joan Davies reported they are fully enrolled and have a waiting list. They now recruit all year and in a variety of ways. Transportation: In Livingston they own the bus and pay the staff. In Bozeman, they contract with another HRDC program to provide transportation and in Belgrade they contract with Belgrade School District. In Belgrade they purchased a house and remodeled it for the Head Start program and are now, working with the HRDC to start the process to apply for a community development block grant to expand that center. They have five child care partnerships. They also have a Family Support Coordinators system that works very well. The relationship starts the minute they apply and continues throughout the time that families are in the program. They have a partnership with the MSU School of nursing to help the Health Coordinator serve families.

**RMDC Head Start in Helena, White Hall, and Townsend:** They are fully enrolled. Their program is participating in a local early intervention task force. It has proved a good way to educate the community about HS. They are working with the local R & R agency to coordinate a group of community individuals interested in school readiness and

will send a team to the School Readiness Summit. They moved two classrooms to a north Helena valley school to eliminate bussing. They have an active Policy Council and made \$4500 profit around a candle sale during the Christmas season. They still have not heard about their review. They are planning on doing a self assessment. They are negotiating with the City of Helena about contracting out some of their transportation needs. They are developing a “Friends of RMDC Head Start” and planning a fund raiser. Over the last couple of years have developed a new staff orientation notebook and found it very helpful when having someone new to the program. All of their classrooms are mixed age groups and do some looping. They have a “Walking Wednesday” program that is nutrition and activity based. All classes go on a walk and encourage parents to also do a walking activity with their children. They had Reflective Supervision training with Janet Humphreys and Vickie Greening. They too are an MBI pilot site. One issue they have is a personnel issue and they have had a difficult time maintaining a sub pool. They experienced an increase in health insurance premiums. They eliminated one bus and went to an extended day where parents transport the children that seems to be working quite well.

**KVHS:** Their fully accessible handicapped playground has been completed. Presently they are housed in the same school district building as the kindergarten and special services. They share training and coordinate services for children. The school district may move Kindergarten out, basically for budget reasons. Last spring they purchased a new bus. Because of increasing costs they have had to make some budget cuts. They recently received a donation of a car and it will be donated to a needy family.

**AWARE EHS:** AWARE Inc., for over a year has worked on providing a living wage for all employees starting at \$ 9.07/per hour. Play therapy has been implemented in the classrooms. A Specialized Training Grant from the Early Childhood Services Bureau Best Beginnings Program has provided 60 hours of training in the community to child care providers to work with children with disabilities and purchase adaptive equipment. In their Review, there was concern that EHS is enrolling too many children with disabilities.

**Ravalli Head Start:** They are working with the Johnson and Johnson Institute on a Health Care research project with local hospitals and families. They received an award from the Head Start Bureau for being an outstanding program.

**Missoula Early Head Start:** They are working on completing program goals. Stacey thanked everyone for keeping their program fully enrolled; they have been enrolling families that have moved to Missoula from all over the state. They serve a high population of homeless families. They are increasing the number of home visits for center based options. They are working on how to deal with the 1% cut in funding. They have had many staff transitions because of pregnancies

**Crow Head Start:** For the first time in a long time they have met funded enrollment. They did more intensive recruitment to achieve this goal. They have a governing board that is very active. They also did not receive a report after their review and will be

reviewed again sometime this year. Currently they are updating the Crow Curriculum, making it more user friendly. They are going to visit Billings HS next month to do a presentation. They are collaborating with the Tribal College to provide teacher education to get AA and BA's. They are getting ready for a Self Assessment next month. They have an NHSA training scheduled in March and their obligation is to pay the travel costs of the presenter. They have been experiencing problems with CDA requirements for staff and finding trainers, behavior problems in the classroom and training teachers to deal with the behaviors. They are planning to reorganize. They received a grant for technical assistance in Parent Involvement. They received HS Bureau Tribal Consultation in Palm Springs. The governing body sent the Tribal Vice chair and Anita. A lot of issues were brought out and discussed, such as flat funding. Will request to reduce enrollment to deal with the budget cuts.

**Northern Cheyenne Head Start:** Currently all teachers and aids have AA degrees. They have collaboration with the local college. They have a lot going with Family Literacy and Parent Involvement. They are working on breaking down barriers and trying to collaborate locally. They face a challenge when it comes to non federal share and funded enrollment.

**Fort Peck Head Start:** The Fort Peck Tribes recently elected a new tribal council with five new council members and a new chairman. They are waiting to find out when they will be reviewed. They too are experiencing the Early Alert System discussing PIR, funded enrollment, etc. Three teachers are currently doing their student teaching and one more will do hers soon. They have two positions that need to be filled, but waiting to see how the cut in funding will affect them. Not filling the positions until they know. Preparing for their annual spring early childhood conference and working with the Ft Peck Community College to use the college's facility during spring break. They have had a high turnover in the nutrition staff. They have collaboration with the public school in Wolf Point.

**Libby EHS:** They have a lot going on with male involvement. Their "Fathers Making Changes" group of EHS/KVHS fathers hold monthly meeting and provide lots of opportunities. It is a community wide group and great collaboration. Center is up and running finally, fully enrolled and child care subsidy money coming in. Part C provider is now using office space in their center, he then comes in and does training. Speech Therapist is also doing the same. They have a lot of resources coming their way.

**Rocky Boy Head Start:** They are getting their program licensed. They were able to hire three new positions after a long time employee retired. They have attendance issues and are finding it difficult to get through to parents how important it is for their child to attend on a regular basis. They are preparing for the review. They are using Child Plus as a tracking system after meeting with Northern Montana Child Development Center in Havre. They have an MOU with Northern Montana College. They have been involved with more programs in the community; they are finally being viewed as children's advocates. This is the fifth year that they are having the Head Start Health Fair. Seven

staff will receive Bachelor's degree through MSU Bozeman, and some will receive their Associates. No longer have to go to Ft Belknap for classes; they have the classes located at Stone Child College. They are implementing sign language and bilingual Cree language in their curriculum. They have contracted with Part C as disabilities managers. They are offering Parent training every Wednesday. Transportation is a large issue.

### **Head Start/State Collaboration Update: (inserted Mary Jane's written report)**

Addressed the proposed automatic licensing of Head Start programs that meet Performance Standards and other accredited early childhood programs – suggested the Head Start Association write a letter to QAD because some hesitation was expressed by QAD as to whether Head Start Performance Standards are equivalent to accreditation.

1. Family Literacy Consortium – Even Start funding is being drastically reduced. Title 1 funding could be used if a school district chooses. I have been requested to ask if any HS/EHS programs have a partnership or connection with Title 1. OPI is seeking a couple of people to be on a panel presentation Feb. 15 in Billings. (Lewistown and Great Falls offered)
2. Early Childhood Partnership for Professional Development – initiated by OPI. Susan Bailey Anderson spoke at our last meeting. CSPD coordinators should be including Head Start teachers in trainings. HS could invite teachers to some of the training that you offer. MBI – some HS programs are model sites and receiving extra TA. This year they will be including infant/toddler mental health at MBI. They have invited Neal Horen  
Be sure to invite your CSPD coordinator to be part of your School Readiness efforts. Missoula EHS chosen as a quality program by the Head Start Bureau.  
Special Needs Subsidy – programs should be accessing if you are licensed.
3. Oral Health – I attended the Region 8 Oral Health Institute with Cheri Seed. We continued our work on our state plan adding some things we learned about there. Will be receiving TA from Valerie Orlando
4. Grant Reapplication – Applied for the Federal version of the Collaboration grant and have verbal approval. Then had to apply for the state version which incorporated the ECCS grant and was called the MT Early Childhood Collaboration Grant. No one else applied. Evaluation is underway now. ECCS evaluator will be new Collaboration evaluator. They are located at U of M and also do the KIDS COUNT for MT.
5. Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant – MOU between Family and Community Health and Early Childhood Services Bureau for me to be coordinator and money to be shared. Core team meets monthly. Work is focused on 9 results. School Readiness and Early Childhood Consultation are main activities.
6. School Readiness Summit – invitation went out, you all should be involved. We will offer teams a community forum to do some preliminary work with each team prior to the Summit. Will be applying for a National Governor's Assoc. grant to begin funding of community follow up activities.
7. Early Childhood Connections Document – is at the printers and will be out later in February. Illustrates connection of Early Learning Guidelines to Head Start Performance Standards, Early Care and Education Knowledge Base and K-12 Standards.

Handed out Investment in Early Childhood article written by the ECCS evaluator and announced the Touch Points training by Dr. T. Berry Brazelton which will be held at Salish-Kootenai College.

**Technical Assistance Specialists Report Region VIII:** In response to questions about the resource library that CDI had, it was reported that when the contract ended with CDI, the library stayed with CDI. Programs can get resource materials from CDI but at a cost. Trainings that are sponsored by the Association are welcome and the collaboration between the two TA Networks Region VIII and XI and the Association is working well. PIR training is coming up, information was handed out. The Regional Office is asking that the clusters for the PIR training are for at least three programs (see attached descriptions) Both Helena and Havre have offered to be training sites. They announced that money is available for the Spanish Institute. Early Alert scheduled around grants and funding cycle to get accurate information. It was mentioned that there were a lot of Health Coordinators positions turnover. TAS will address this issue. Fiscal: if you have new fiscal officers, there will be planning of future clusters in the area, all Montana programs are invited to take part in the cluster trainings.

**Region XI Technical Assistance Report:** Georgie Sparks is the Branch Chief. Content area specialists are located in Washington DC. Elaine shared many resources. See attached written report

**Stacey Scarborough: Region VIII Head Start Association: (See attachments)**

**Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council (MECAC) Report from Scot Anderson**

- Executive Planning Process (EPP) is taking place now. It is the process for formulating a budget for the upcoming 2007 Legislature. Recommendations from MECAC regarding early childhood programs that they would like to see in the budget
  - Maintain eligibility for scholarship program at \$150 % of poverty and adjusted annually
  - Maintain child care reimbursement for parents at 75% of child care market and updated annually
  - Serve 26% of the eligible children for the Best Beginnings Programs within two years.
  - Stabilize funding for CPS child care through ECSB
  - Request general fund for additional money made available in Federal Dollars
  - Licensing: Revision in the laws, accredited programs automatically licensed, clean up language
  - Rate setting: clean up language and consideration of possibility of monthly rate
  - Increase number of Child Care licensing workers
  - Quality: participation in star quality program would increase
  - Fund SACC grants out of money appropriated by legislature separate from quality funds

- Funding for After school network infrastructure
- Funding Early Childhood Consultation services
- Fund PreK pilots as part of the school readiness summit.
- Fund HS and Two Star quality programs under the Bridge the Gap proposal for those families who lose eligibility during the year.

**Guest:** Lynn Hellenga from the Nutrition and Physical Activity Program at Montana State University presented information about the nutrition part of the program. She is also the Five A Day coordinator for the state. Contact her for more information.

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### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Finance/Nominating**

- Consensus was reached on accepting the proposed budget for fiscal year beginning Feb 1.
- NHSA nominations for Beating the Odds and Parent of the Year are due into the Head Start Association Office by Monday, April 3, 2006. Selections will be made at the April meeting and sent to the Regional Association. Applications are available on the NHSA website.
- Judy Bryngelson and Debra Lindstrand will coordinate a wage survey

#### **Governmental Affairs:**

- Still raising funds for Montana Advocates for Children (MAC)
- Legislative Agenda to bring to MAC  
Bridging the Gap is the # 1 priority for us. Ask for state funding for this program  
Funding for PreK model should include Head Start  
Language of PreK infused into existing  
Children's mental health  
Mandatory kindergarten/ age 5 discussions  
HMHB in support of restraint and car seats  
Child care assistance if adult is in the home  
License waiver for Head Start/Early Head Start
- Invite Steve Yeakel and Mike Cooney to next Association meeting
- Write a letter to NHSA for priorities for Montana. Comment on NRS
  - Scot will review letter previously written
- Write a letter to the HS Bureau on the re-reviews of the Tribal programs and how expensive that is.

#### **Native American Committee Report:**

- Suggested the September Association be held on a reservation: Jeanne Christopher offered her program to host it. Consensus was reached.

- Training: Elaine and Todd will work together to put PDM and Fiscal training together for the September meeting. A letter should be written to both Regional TA Networks requesting the training. The training will need to be the day before the Association meeting as many directors may want to attend.

**T/TA:**

- Consensus reached to charge \$20.00 registration fee for the training held at this meeting. Christy will send out an invoice.
- Consensus was reached to charge a \$25.00 registration fee for future trainings
- Next training: Wellness For Staff during April meeting. During this time of budget cuts and more families in crisis, staff needs should be addressed. Suggested trainers: Andrea Savage, Dayle Hayes, Dr. Paulette Running Wolf; TAS will come up with suggestions.
- Mona wanted to go on the record to say she appreciated that suggestions made by the TA committee were accepted.
- Agenda item for April: Plan the full year of training

Fund raising raffle was held: \$407.00

Pillow: Alma Young

Terry Adams: Small quilt

Mary Jane Friske: Large quilt

**Evaluation:**

- Great to see the collaboration demonstrated
- Enjoyed being here and networking, can take something home, receive some things,
- Lots of fun
- Extended sharing was good; keep it more on track, glad to have Clyde and Jeanne,
- Thanks of folks in Bozeman
- Like the networking really helps
- Tea instead of coffee
- My first time enjoyed, choose three top things that happened for a program
- Meeting very informative
- Liked the sharing, liked the networking, other information, Table tents are helpful, liked the nutrition speaker, wonderful,
- Second the networking,
- Commend Viola as president and all of involvement
- Liked the networking, nice and big, cold room, appreciate the videos; we appreciate the piece of education.
- Now feel I can call on colleagues
- Thanks to Wheat Montana and IGA in Belgrade
- Liked, the big room, TA peoples all being here, the collaboration of the training was exciting. 100% of the Tribal programs were represented. Appreciate the facilitator, timekeeper and recorder. I learned a lot from listening to everyone.
- Turn to your right and say I want you there in April

- I am so appreciative that Tribal Programs are here to help us serve our NA population.

Appreciate time for the sharing time.

Always enjoy these meetings and learn a lot

Meeting adjourned

**Next meeting: April 6 & 7, 2006 Great Falls, MT**