

Montana Head Start Association
September 28, 2006
Polson, Montana

Present: Mary Jane Standeart, Elizabeth Reece, Scot Anderson, Shawna Hooper, Karla Seaman, Andrea Savage, Debra Lindstrand, Susan Goffena, Susan Carlson, Wendy Bull Child, Betty Williamson, Terri Granger, Kathy Leary, Sacety Scarborough, John Filz, Darrel Christensen, Krista McCune, Barb Brophy, Joan Davies, Patty Dahl, Tom Richards, Cal Spangler, Rosemary Rosenberry, Anita Birdinground, Jeanne Christopher,

Guests: Rhonda Houston, Mary Musil, Brenda Peppers

Rhonda Houston, Montana Cooperative Services, explained how the cooperative buying services worked and handed out a packet with details of the services and contact information.

General program updates:

Central Montana Head Start (CMHS): Completed their reorganization. They had requested to reduce enrollment, but were denied. They now have six classrooms with 18 children in each classroom. They have an ongoing problem getting health care providers to serve Head Start families. They are looking at writing a rural health grant. They contacted McDonald's restaurant about getting a McDonald Health Mobile. It is very expensive and they are proposing to use grant funds to get the Care Mobile in Billings to come to CMHS sites. CMHS puts a Well Child Clinic twice a year and doctors and dentists come to the center. They have quite a few new staff this year.

Opportunities Inc. Head Start: They have had to change classroom sizes this year. Previously, classrooms were 20 children for 4 year olds. They added another classroom to attempt get class size down and not hire as many special needs assistants. They have a collaborative agreement with the school district for HS slots called Little Learners and hired 20 new staff to implement the program. Little Learners is primarily for the working poor; CACFP income guidelines are used for eligibility. Head Start administers the program for the District. Little Learners does not provide comprehensive Head Start services, preschool services in general. They did an intensive training of staff for the new program and currently have two open teacher positions. Some of the certified teachers discovered there was a big difference in early childhood and teaching in the primary grades. A retired dentist has offered to put dental chair in the program; he will carry own insurance and do all of the screenings. He will work as liaison with the dental community to find a dental home for those children who need one. They no longer use Child Plus to track children, they use another software program. They have union negotiations year, Karla has recommended Opportunities Inc., hire someone outside of Head Start management to negotiate. It becomes too uncomfortable between staff and management. For children with incarcerated parents they provide support services, referrals and work with Deb Kottel from the College of Great Falls.

Child Start Inc.: They are a Montana Behavior Initiative (MBI) pilot program. Currently are in union negotiation. They are scheduled for an on-site review this year. Their priorities are social/emotional development and parent involvement. At one time the program served several children with an incarcerated parent. Since the county revised TANF benefits, most families choose not to move to Deer Lodge. Fatherhood presentations will be available in outlying communities, as well as videos available for loan. It is a struggle to maintain and emphasis on fatherhood with funding cuts and losing fatherhood coordinators. Missoula sent a team to the School Readiness Summit and has had follow-up meetings and are submitting a proposal for a grant for a public awareness campaign. The local team continues to meet identify ways to collaborate.

Salish Kootenai Early Childhood Services:

They are working on being fully staffed. They have changed services to families, in an effort to save transportation costs. They have a combination program with increased home visits. Three year olds attend class on Tuesday and Thursday; four year olds attend Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The program finds it difficult to find food service staff. In an effort to cope with decreased funding they are concentrating on the performance standards and any extra activities will do as they can. Orientation was held before kids came to school and that worked out well; lots of males attended. They had a monitoring last April and just got the report. They have been asked to report attendance and waiting list by the fourth of each month to the program specialist. Children with incarcerated parents have many needs that need attention immediately. The foster and extended family members who are caring for the children need mental health support for the children and families. A request was made to the Tribal Council to expand in two communities to include child care. The Tribal Council has challenged tribal program management staff to come with two revenue enhancements. As a group they are reading: *Execution the Discipline of Getting Things Done* and a book on the stress of organizational change.

Crow Tribes Head Start:

They had a review the first week of school and found it to be positive experience; the findings were not surprising and over all it went pretty well. Enrollment in the main center is high, but, remote centers are experiencing low enrollment. They are collaborating with child care and social services for classrooms and parent education. Ten to twelve of the education staff will receive their AA degree and some are getting BA degrees. They have hired a new career development coordinator, who is also a CDA representative. Head start has been challenged to teach their children to speak Crow, to be effective it needs to be a community effort. Anita will finish her Masters in Public Administration in the spring.

Northwest Montana Head Start: They are experiencing a shortage of staff and are currently down seven staff. They are also an MBI site. They have moved in to their new building and are up and running. They had an on-site review last May and are waiting for the report.

Young Families Early Head Start:

Things going well and have had no turn over in staff this year. They are funded for 32 slots and have a long waiting list. If Billings decides to offer full-time kindergarten, they will have to find a new home and are looking at possible buildings and building sites. United Way of Billings sponsored and Early Childhood Summit and the community is interested in investing in early childhood. Billings early childhood is not networked as a community as they should be.

AWARE Early Head Start:

Staff retention has been an on-going issue. Program wide AWARE adopted a living wage policy; \$9.07 is the lowest hourly wage an employee of AWARE earns. With federal budget cuts, increasing operation costs and wages it has been a struggle to meet the obligation.. The education benefits they offer help retain staff. They have a pre-release center in Butte and have put together a mental health program and work with the prerelease center to do family therapy. Fatherhood had been a big initiative for a few years, have fully integrated fatherhood activities throughout the program. They have a Dad's group that meets on a monthly basis. They are bringing the School Readiness Summit information to partners.

Rocky Mountain Development Council Head Start: They are now contracting transportation with the City of Helena – cost savings to the program is about \$10,000. **They had a Federal Review May 2006 and had no findings.** A Team was chosen to go to Literacy Training put on by the National Head Start Family Literacy Center. Programs that attend will be given the opportunity to develop training teams to enhance family literacy efforts in their program: The team is made up of three Head Start staff, one Head Start parent, and one staff member from Adult Learning Center. They received program improvement funds for flooring needs in Townsend and playground development at Rossiter School. Working on purchasing the building that houses the Whitehall HS program to allow stabilization of HS services there. Continuing with a successful partnership with School District #1. Head Start staff members are serving on several committees with the district. They are in their second year of Montana Community Foundation Grant for unmet medical and dental needs and a “book a month” to go home with children. They received a \$500 grant from the L&C Community Foundation to begin a parent resource library. They are involved in “National Walk to School Day”. They started the year with full enrollment and have hired a new nutritionist. Their major concerns are funding, utility costs, and fundraising stipulations. They have three books that are made available to families who have an incarcerated parent. They also have traditionally given them a blanket made by a volunteer. They have an individual from Montana Dads Incarcerated (MDI) on the FCP Management team, and have been meeting with MDI and Department of Corrections for several months to try and get a bedtime story program going. They recently participated in a grant writing process in which they assisted in getting a technical assistance grant to the State Collaboration Project to support families with an incarcerated parent. They are forming a Fatherhood Project planning group – first meeting is on October 3rd. All dads and daddy types in the program are invited to participate. Craig Hart (FCP Specialist) is coming to our program from Denver in order to assist. We are planning bookshelf builds again this year for

dads/kids. We will again have our job/hobby share in March when dads/daddy types come into classrooms and share their skills and interests. Their School Readiness Team wants to continue meeting as a group. This will happen shortly. One team member will represent us at the Business Summit for School Readiness on Oct. 4th in Missoula. The team has a “vision” about having an Early Childhood Community Center and some sort of “mobile” services for our rural areas. They are promoting an Early Childhood endorsement for K-3 school teachers and Early Childhood certification and training for childcare providers and child development and life skills (in regards to parenting) at the middle school level. The team supports state funded preschool for all.

HRDC:

Over summer their health coordinator resigned and they have had to fill many positions for this year. In Bozeman it is difficult to fill entry level positions. HRDC Board voted 3% cost of living and because of Head Start funding cuts and other increased costs it will be difficult to honor the raise. They are experiencing many budget problems. Union is working with classroom staff and defining the bargaining unit. As far as helping children whose parents are incarcerated, they support children on individual basis, one dad in their program whose wife is in prison, they helped with housing. One thing they see is grandparents are raising their children’s children. MSU has a program for grandparents raising children. To engage fathers, they have put together totes for dads to take home with activities for the dad and child to do together. Thrive! is an agency in Bozeman and Belgrade that offers several programs/activities for dads and children. They are down eight children in Livingston; they get many applications and most are over the income eligibility.

Butte Head Start: They are fully enrolled right now. They ran into problem of union wanting a raise and resolved it by dropping a classroom and raising classroom numbers; this freed up enough money to fund the raises. They had to hire ten new staff people this year. It is very difficult finding people in Dillon. They considered dropping transportation in Dillon. In the past they had waiting lists at their child care partnerships, but that is not the case now.

Ravalli Head Start:

They are fully enrolled. They have had more turnovers in staff than usual. They dropped their partnerships sites and increased class sizes to absorb those children into the center based program. They made a request to decrease enrollment, but never received an answer from the Office of Head Start. They have 100% classroom teachers with degrees. Their strategic planning is almost complete. Ravalli has a new mental health program and continuing to work on MBI activities. They don’t have a specific program for children whose parents are incarcerated, but provide individual support services. This is the third year of a partnership with a program in Missoula to do fatherhood stuff. They received \$1000 from Taco Bell to support fatherhood a retreat. They had a community team attend the School Readiness Summit; they will use money from the Summit follow-up to hire someone to help them achieve their goals.

Missoula Early Head Start:

To address the 1% reduction in funding cuts; they cut three positions. They have a lot of new staff which is hard on systems. Their view of Fatherhood is for it to be fully integrated into everything they do. They conducted a survey with parents for two years and got the message from fathers, "Don't leave us out". The mothers said "...leave us out, we need a break". They also contract with individual to do parent activities with parents; he is at every event they hold. One example: They hold an event, mothers and fathers meet in group separately around a topic and then get together and discuss. When dealing with children whose parents are incarcerated it is very individualized. Missoula EHS wants to become a WIC site for families. They are discussing about having more for center based options for families. They are working on how to use media for home visits and orientation.

Deer Lodge County Head Start:

They are fully enrolled but have the same challenges as others, children who did not show up after being enrolled. They do have a waiting list. They are working on MBI and implementing the DECA. They had quite a few education department staff turnover and are working on training the new staff. If a child has a parent who is incarcerated they are sent weekly notes. Fathers are very involved and are included in the enrollment process. If parents are single, both parents get the information. Parent conferences are sometimes held at center so both parents can attend. Did a survey of fathers of what activities they would like to do. Next week is male involvement week and many activities are planned.

Kootenai Valley Head Start:

The first week of school went well. There were several staff changes, with assistance moving into vacant positions. Recently they have received a lot of grants. They have plans to build outside bathrooms and update inside plumbing and have worked with the school district to pay most of expenses. Fathers are very involved in their program. They have fathers and grandfathers on PC. Many fathers are subs on the bus, just hired a father as bus assistance. All parents and families are invited to all trainings. Libby sent a community team to the School Readiness Summit and a received grant to purchase and start a phonics program. They will teach teachers how to implement the program first and then work with the child care community.

Blackfeet Early Childhood Services:

They are working on renovating buildings; they acquired a USDA grant to remodel and update the heating systems and flooring. They opened an Early Head Start in Heart Butte and in Seville. They have a large waiting list. They have developed a cultural program that includes a 0-3 immersion into the Blackfeet Culture and Language. They received a Home Visitor grant and a Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Grant. They have a partnership with the college and have eleven people who graduated with a BA and four more will soon graduate. With funding cuts it has been a struggle to keep staff; there have been positions cuts and people are wearing many hats. They do referral for children whose parents might be incarcerated. Male involvement: they had a demonstration project and it was a successful and now have written for the fatherhood grant. They are looking at centralizing transportation with Blackfeet transit.

Regional Office Update: Marilyn Hosea presented an update from Debby Hedin.

1. Ross extends his appreciation to MT grantees who attended the Home Visitor Institute, in Rapid City SD the end of August. He also conveyed if you would like to provide feedback to e-mail him.
2. Ross and our RO staff would like to also thank Judy B. for her years of service to HS and providing nationally leadership and quality services. We wish you well in your future endeavors.
3. Two IM's have been issued; one on staff hires and grantee boards and the other on reporting enrollment.
4. We finished our third EAS call and have again been positively acknowledged for the efforts of our grantees. We realize the recognition is a shared accomplishment, with much of the success being attributed to the directors, management staff and governance structure.
5. Program Specialists will continue to make one visit a year.
6. PIR Validation visits are underway, 2 in our Region
7. Monitoring update (no more core questions- one protocol)
8. Still anticipate Reorganization to be completed by Oct 1, 2006
9. 100 grantees were scheduled to be reviewed in FY 06—One in our region. (one in CO in FY 06 – we know of another re-review of a triennial completed in 06 with the re-review scheduled in early October in FY 07
10. The Pres has proposed flat funding not sure yet about across the board discretionary cuts. For what it is worth, this RO supported the reduction in enrollment, but we understand there were no approved reductions by the office of Head Start.
11. We do not anticipate there will be erroneous payment reviews since the effort did not produce a significant error rate to support the continuation of the reviews.
12. thank you for your work--

CACFP:

Mary Musil, the new child nutrition manager and Brenda Peppers, CACFP program specialist gave a presentation on CACFP. HS/EHS programs deliver the CACFP to the most children in the state. Mary stated when HS/EHS does well you bring along others. Their #1 priority is to pay promptly so programs can buy food for children. They are learning that September is very busy and it may be better to offer trainings in November. The two major nutritional problems for children 3-5 are hunger or obesity. A discussion took place and Mary noted the concerns and will address them.

Statewide Fatherhood Strategic Plan:

The Regional Office has asked every state to develop a statewide strategic plan on fatherhood. Tom Richards was involved in the Regional Strategic Plan and will take the lead on developing the state pan. A committee will work on the plan and Craig Hart, Fatherhood Specialist for Region VIII will assist Montana in developing the plan. An initial planning meeting will be held in Helena on November 17, 2006. Programs may send a representative to the planning meeting. Patty Dahl's program will host the meeting.

Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnosis & Treatment (EPSDT)

Terry Thompson from DPHHS gave a Power Point Presentation on EPSDT. She handed out a brochure: EPSDT: A Well Child Health Program and a Periodicity and answered questions. There was a lot of discussion around what is required by Medicaid and what physicians are actually doing. There is a general feeling that mental health screenings are not being done. There is not a required mental health screening tool; so not certain what criteria doctors are using. For more information: <http://www.mtmedicaid.org>

Montana Medicaid's Periodicity Schedule 2006

Comprehensive Well Child Exam:	4 years
Birth to 1 month	5 years
2 months	6 years
4 months	8 years
6 months	10 years
9 months	12 years (before middle school)
12 months	14 years
15 months	16 years
18 months	18 years
24 months	20 years
3 years	

Vision exam: A vision screen appropriate to the age of the child should be conducted at each Well Child Screen. If the child is uncooperative, re-screen within six months.

Hearing: A hearing screen appropriate to the age of the child should be conducted at each Well Child Screen. All newborns should be screened.

Dental: Dental screens should be performed by a child's dentist. Initially, the first screen takes place when the first tooth erupts or no later than the child's first birthday. Dental screens should be performed every 6 months thereafter.

Region VIII Head Start Association Report:

Stacey handed out the minutes from the Region VIII HSA meeting held in June. A lot of the meeting focused on the technical assistance. Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center website is up and running: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>. She announced that nominations for NHSA awards from Region VIII are due. They discussed challenges program specialists will not be able to work on with programs. Stacey conducted a survey of top issues and concerns that programs have. She will take this to the Region VIII Association.

- Meth and the problems it generates—need money to cope
- Enough money to hire adequate staff; especially for mental health services
- We don't have economy of scale to manage without reducing numbers.
- Would like to receive more money; we don't have state support for early childhood.
- We continue to do more with less and as long as we don't let something go we will continue to get cuts.
- Differences in property values in counties; for money and support in Denver does not understand what the differences are between communities to community.
- MT Head Start Association would like to support having Program Specialists in this area.
- Program specialists on my side of the fence; who lives closer who opens their mail.
- Transportation
- Dental access
- Income eligibility
- Unfunded mandates
- The only thing you can do with less is less.
- We have to do less what kind of less do you want us to do.
- Need to expand Early Head Start.

Montana Advocates for Children (MAC): Scot Anderson gave an update. MAC representatives met and considered all of the recommendations for the Executive Planning Process (EPP). Annual market rate survey that will be reimbursed at 75%

- Eligibility updated annually cc @ 150% of poverty
- CPS and ECSB funding
- Minor changes in child care act (which authorizes child care payments) Monthly funding. Solution to delete from code the words “daily, hourly” and the state could have some flexibility in setting rates and could go to monthly.
- Seat belts as a primary offense
- Head Start Bridging the Gap
- Issue of full time kindergarten, number one priority of the Governor and Superintendent of OPI. Legislation would permit on a voluntary basis.
- Lobbyist hired: Steve Yeakel

Consensus has not yet been reached on a Legislative agenda.

Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council (MECAC): Scot Anderson reported on the recent MECAC meeting.

- Discussed EPP
- Relative Care
- Karen Knoll-Moran: talked about deficit reduction act that passed this spring. TANF reauthorization: now needs to compare to 2005 as base year.
- Extra \$200 million for CDF
- ACF reorganization, don’t know what it will look like, TANF, Head Start, and Child Care.
- Federal improper payment initiative and Montana was in a pilot to look at error rates.
- Report from program policy committee about HS receiving payment from CCDF. Found there was support from both the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau.
- Recommendation for income ineligibility: child support payments should not be counted. Military housing allowances should count as income.

Head Start/State Collaboration Project: Update for Head Start Assoc. – Sept. 2006

1. School Readiness Summit – held in June, 13 community teams and one state team. Most teams identified public awareness and parent education as their main goals.
2. Business/EC Summit is Oct. 4 in Missoula – rep from each will be in attendance and asked to facilitate table discussion over lunch. Art Rolnick from Federal Reserve and Anna Lovejoy from NGA are presenting and facilitating and Wash. Foundation is hosting with Governor’s Office.
3. CCSSO meeting in Big Sky funded by Pew Charitable Trust and Pre-K Now. Nine states without state funded pre-k, educated and encouraged to do so. We decided to support full time K, public awareness, professional development.
4. Blended School Readiness Team – ECCS Core Team, School Readiness State Team, Big Sky group. We met on Aug. 16 with Linda McCulloch to share perspectives and issues. That team meets again on Oct. 31.

5. Gave a presentation to the Education and Local Funding Interim Legislative committee and the Child and Family Interim Legislative Committee – raise awareness about the scope of early childhood, present activities, support of full time K and efforts at coordinating.
6. Received a second NGA grant which blends well with the ECCS grant which is about systems working together, supporting each other, blending management, data gathering, etc.
7. Just received notice that we were awarded the ECCS Implementation Grant
8. Awarded a technical assistance grant from the Family and Corrections Network. Focused on the Bill of Rights for children with incarcerated parents. This grant is mostly about public awareness, advocacy and improving some part of the system to ensure that children are safe and encouraged to maintain a healthy relationship with their parents in spite of the situation.
9. During lunch at Day on the Hill last Friday, a presentation of books for young children was made to Mrs. Schweitzer. Various EC people and groups contributed. Thank you to all.
10. Need to replace Addie Haugen on the Family Support Services Advisory Council.

Region VIII TA Report:

Health managers are meeting November 3, 2006, in Great Falls. If you have any questions regarding EPDST, send to Todd or Melinda and they will forward them to Terri Thompson. Education managers are meeting in Missoula on November 8, 2006. The Director's Institute is scheduled in December. Melinda has offered to assist Andie Everingham, the webmaster, update the website; log on to www.headstartmt.org to see if information about your program is current. There will be changes in the Region Eight structure, should know about those soon.

Committee Reports:

Finance Report: (see attached budget)

August 31, 2006

Checking Balance: \$25,413.32

Money Market Balance: \$30,762.00

Savings Account Balance: \$7412.61

Nominating Committee:

A slate of officers, representatives and NHSA award nominees was presented to the Board:

President: Tom Richards

Vice President: Anita Birdinground

Secretary/Treasurer: Patty Dahl

Regional Representatives: Director, Stacey Scarborough

Staff: Renee Funk

Consensus was reached on waiting to nominate a parent.

Montana Advocates for Children: Debra Lindstrand

Family Support Services Council: need a nomination looking for someone parent or staff and pay all expenses, contact Mary Jane if you have a staff person interested.

Consensus was reached on nominating the following for NHSA Awards:

- Lisa Shull—Support Staff of the Year
- Heather Preble—Humanitarian of the Year
- Kara Hardest—Leadership Award
- Bradley Moonen—Father of the Year
- Caroline Walters—Teacher of the Year

Personnel Report:

Scot reported that the annual performance review had been completed.

Native American Committee:

The committee discussed common issues they are facing; many are the same as all HS/EHS programs. Susan is President of the NW Native American Head Start Coalition and a national representative. She will give a report at each MT Head Start Association meeting on the Native American Head Start regional and national activities. A discussion took place about arranging a meeting between Reno Charette, the Governor's Coordinator of Indian Affairs, and Native American MtHSA Association members on the same day as Head Start/Early Head Day at the Capitol. Mary Jane will try to arrange the meeting.

T/TA Committee:

The committee planned the trainings for the next two meetings.

- January:
 - Mental Health and Wellness:
 1. Meth related challenges
 - a. Children
 - i. Mental and emotional issues
 - ii. Physical implications
 - b. Families—challenges that staff deal with
 2. FAS Related Challenges
 - a. Children
 - i. Mental and emotional issues
 - ii. Physical implications
 - b. Families—challenges that staff deal with
 3. Staff Impact
 - a. Secondary Post-traumatic stress
 - b. Coping skills
 - c. Relaxation techniques
 4. Applying the Performance Standards to Mental Health (Lydia or Cheryl)
- April meeting:
 1. Disabilities:
 - Body strengthening activities
 - Triage—children who need help, but do not receive any

- Assisting Parents who have just found out their child has a disability
- Special needs parents that have special needs children
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- 2. Possible trainers: Child Care Plus, or PLUK
- At the next meeting will pass out list of what Booz Allen Hamilton TA has to offer in the way of training.
- 2007-2008 Training:
 - Checklist from BAH will be used
 - Survey of Association Board for training ideas
 - Possible training subjects:
 - Fatherhood/Brain Development/Gender differences in learning
 - Education: Math and Science
 - Mentoring “Circle” Book

Governmental Affairs:

HS/EHS Day at the Capitol is scheduled for January 26, 2007 from 12-2:00.

- Some preparation for the Day should take place prior to attending
 - Advocacy training
 - Christy will send information for programs to share with parents and staff
- A tour of the Capital should be arranged
- Parents should send an invitation to their legislator and make arrangements to meet them in person prior to the Legislative session and then again on Head Start Day.
- Mary Jane and Christy will also send invitations to every legislator to HS/EHS at the Capitol.

Evaluation of meeting:

Great location, good agenda, loved the flexibility, glad for the networking opportunity and knowing not out there alone, learned a lot, good information on fiscal and coop buying, wonderful facility, very interesting meeting, great atmosphere, really enjoy the Collaboration Report, good EPSDT information, thanks for the hospitality, appreciate talking to other directors, really good meeting and training, for first time—very informative, networking very nice.

For the next meeting would like to invite Hank Hudson, Administrator from Human & Community Services Division and Mary Dalton, Administrator of the Health Resources Division.

The meeting was adjourned.

SAVE THESE NEXT MtHSA MEETING DATES:

January 25 & 26, 2007 HELENA

April 12 & 13, 2007 BILLINGS