

Montana Head Start Association
Minutes
April 16-17, 2009 Lewistown, MT

Present: Mary Jane Standaert, Renee Funk, Gail Smith, Carol Davison, Barb Brophy, Gail Mickey, Patty Dahl, Ron Conrad, Ken Miller, Debbie Stewart, Cindy Sinclair, Bonne Cheyney, Crystal Tyler, Rose Swan, Clyde Wolf Black, Minnetta Iron Pipe, Alma Young, Robert Fox, Ecole Morris, Phil Burgess, Shawna Hooper, Pam de Rosier, Kathy Olson, Karla Seaman

Guests: Ross Weaver, Todd Lester, Melinda Edwards, Sue Noble

President Clyde Wolf Black opened the meeting and welcomed Board members and guests. Patty Dahl acted as selected as facilitator for the meeting, Phil Burgess timekeeper, Mary Jane and Christy will record the notes.

Program updates:

Northwest Montana Head Start Program —Reneé Funk reported that their program underwent a federal review earlier in the month and did very well. It was a small review team of five. The PDM part of the review was done via the phone and faxing information to the reviewers over the course of about six hours. She recommended to programs that staff be familiar with the protocols, the review team closely follows the protocols. They will send you a list of what they want, have it ready. The program is in the process of purchasing a facility in Columbia Falls; they will combine the White Fish and Columbia Falls classrooms. They are doing a lot of program reorganization.

Child Start Inc. They are hosting a Kindergarten transition fair and are investigating hosting an "Ask an attorney" evening. It would be helpful to parents and have the possibility of generating in-kind. The program has contracted with Clear Choice Insurance to provide health insurance for their staff. They offered them better coverage for less money. They are participating in Week of the Young Child activities; theme is recycling. They could have a review as early as October. More than half of the administration team is new. They will be using quality money for new phone system, and to upgrade computers and vehicles

Ft Belknap Head Start: Alma Young reported they are preparing for a review, scheduled for May 4. They feel confident they are ready for the review team. The Risk Management meeting went well. Walking Shield will be in their community in May for vision screenings. They will focus on HS and school age children. They have a lab set up and will make glasses on site. They participated in a health fair last week of the month.

They have kindergarten transitions established with both Harlem and Hays/Lodge Pole schools.

Blackfeet Early Childhood Services: They have an acting director at this time. They are working on a self assessment which is helping them identify strengths and weaknesses. The program with the tribal representatives on shared governance; the meeting went very well. Finding health care services for families is a struggle, especially dental with one dentist in Browning. They continue to work and partner with HIS. HS closes on May 8 with year end activities planned. They are working on continuation grant. Because of many break ins they have installed security cameras in every classrooms. The cameras have also been very helpful not only for security but have helped classrooms teachers. They can review the tapes to see strength and weaknesses in how they manage their classrooms. Between EHS & HS they have many staff close to receiving their BA. Also doing the Blackfeet language screening to see how much language they have obtained each year.

Northern Cheyenne Head Start: Clyde reported that they have stable funding for this year. They will soon be closing down for the year and have lots of parental involvement activities planned. They have developed a program that works focuses on family preservation. Wisdom Keeper comes to the center one night a week to present on a topic such as honesty or kindness. They also invite elders to talk. Getting ready of WOYC activities which will target preventing child abuse; it is a community wide event with a parade and community services represented. HS and local area schools have formed a partnership called the Circle of Schools. The goal is to align early childhood math curriculums used by Head Start and other early childhood programs with kindergarten curriculum. Early childhood teachers, kindergarten and first grade teachers along with administrators will meet and work together in June. They are working on upgrading their technology capabilities. They had a picnic for their elementary age "Reading Buddies"; they recently lost their mental health provider but have selected a new provider.

Kootenai Valley Head Start: They are beginning their fall enrollment process. The program is doing pilot program with High School boys who to the program and job shadow—office, kitchen, custodial, etc. It has been a good experience for all. Last day is May 13, ready for annual picnic. With the quality money they are planning on hiring floater position to help with the Education, especially the full day staff who does not have enough planning time.

Northern Montana Childhood Development Center: Cindy Sinclair is the new Director, replacing Frank Witter who retired. Their EHS program is in the Baby FACES study. They finished a self assessment using the federal monitoring protocol which seemed to work well. They have a new dentist in the community that will see the children on Medicaid and uses a sliding fee scale. Fatherhood Involvement is very active— with an activity each day. They plan on a big portion of the quality money for education staff, paying for college classes and hiring an extra person (floater) to help out in the classroom where needed.

HRDC IX HEAD START: Availability of a dentist has been an issue in their community. A sliding scale clinic has added a second dentist hopefully that will help the situation. They are in the process of enrolling for next fall and have a lot of slots to fill. Risk Management went well; grant has been submitted. They are struggling finding in-kind match. They are cutting support staff at end of the school year to save costs. Have some turnover, but have been able to replace them. There is some interest in the community in applying for an EHS grant, but finding an appropriate facility would be a huge issue.

Action for Eastern Montana Head Start: High School athletes come into the classrooms and read to children, lots of pictures in the paper. They have had lots of turnover. They plan on using some of the quality money to help with BA/AA degrees for education staff. They have an active family involvement component, including a Dude Day for dads. Have computer problems. Promise has been wonderful on line for tech support. The Ronald McDonald dental van is scheduled to come to their community in Miles City.

RMDC Head Start in Helena, Townsend, and White Hall: Their annual major fundraiser "EXTRAVAGANZA" put on by Friends of Head Start is scheduled for this month. Their goal is to raise \$28,000 to support Creative Curriculum and awareness in the community. They have a Federal Review scheduled for May 10th. They are a site chosen for CLASS. Their last day for this year is 31st of May with big end of the year events planned. AWARE is providing mental health services on site; getting kinks worked out. They have been at full enrollment and have lots of intakes completed for fall. The Tri-County School Readiness team has a reading event planned during the WOYC. Quality money: would like to have more staff training days around creative curriculum.

Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Head Start: did their transition to kindergarten differently year. The principal from the elementary school came down and registered the children and answered parent's questions. They registered 100% of the children. It

turned out to be a positive and fun event. WOYC starts Monday with parade, followed by HS open house, and ending with a carnival. They got notified that they will be reviewed. Butte Head Start staff visited and provided a training in "I am Moving I am Learning". The staff has embraced IMIL and has formed two teams with 25 participating. They have lost over 280 lbs as a staff. Children are into it. They will take care of some major plumbing problems with some of the quality money. June 4 is the last day for children until fall.

Butte Head Start: They have a federal Review beginning May 10th and are working a lot getting ready for it. There are some weaknesses with number of children their mental health provider can serve. They will use some of the quality money to get some behavior help in classroom. Their energy bills are outrageous. They are having a light and window audit to see if there is some way to reduce the costs. The staff likes IMIL and enjoys training other programs. They use it in the classrooms and with parents. They too struggle with in-kind. The Chamber did a book drive for families.

Opportunities Inc.: They have a federal Review sometime this upcoming year. This time of year they focus on evaluation—doing self assessment and review strategic plan. Head Start has a huge waiting list. There seems to be fewer children that are dropping from program. They have many ideas on how to use Quality funds and are definitely looking at compensation and increased costs. The community is very eager for EHS and has been anticipating expansion for the past six years. Opportunities Inc would partner with the Health Department for Home Visiting. They are fund raising for dental services. They have partnered with the Rotary club in Great Falls to start a campaign where individual members can sponsor a child and help the family by working with their dentist. AWARE is on site to provide mental health services. They also contract with mental health clinicians to work with children and provide training with all staff and individuals.

Central Montana Head Start: will e-mail report

Parent Showcase: Tova Gere a former Head Start parent and current employee of the Central Montana Head Start shared her Head Start experience with the Board.

Ross Weaver, Region VIII Head Start Program Manager gave a federal update and answered questions.

Head Start/State Collaboration Office update—Mary Jane Standaert

Collaboration Needs Assessment – required by the Head Start Act of all our programs in each of the priority areas of the Collaboration grant. Asks and answers how you are doing in your local communities and with comparable state agencies. From which we are supposed to glean information that would be part of our work plan. This first time was a bit rocky, with not all programs responding or misunderstanding what was expected. Some things will need to be modified for the next time, which will most likely be in late 2010 or early 2011. Just know it is a permanent part of our jobs and reporting to OHS.

School Readiness Teams – were recently given an opportunity to send representatives to a Touchpoints Individual Level training. Prior to that, they were given an opportunity to apply for some funding to further their endeavors. Head Start/Early HS are strong partners in these teams but I want to see more programs benefiting from the opportunities that become available. Is there anything you want me to do to help you be more successful, or to help your team plan, implement, communicate, etc. Things you need to accomplish in your programs can be priorities for the School Readiness Team.

School Readiness Summit – focused on parents – May 28 & 29, 2009 in Helena. Some travel stipends may be available.

Child Care Health Advocacy Training – recently made available to all 12 Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and I offered recently to your Health Coordinators as a resource for them for staff and parent training.

Parenting from the Heart – train the trainer – was held recently, sponsored by WORD, Inc and the ECCS grant. Some Head Start programs took part.

PREVENT Initiative – partnership between Child and Family Services, Montana Children's Trust Fund, Collaboration/ECCS Office, Early Childhood Services Bureau, Florence Crittendon Home and Havre. This is a national TA opportunity that we were chosen to take part in. We will be supporting the training of home visitors in the Havre area and working on public awareness regarding child abuse and neglect.

Montana Head Start Association: Mary Jane and Christy gave a presentation on the relationship between the Collaboration Office and the Montana Head Start Association. The Collaboration Office/grant could look differently in the future. The Association needs to do some sustainability planning. A discussion took place around the funding HS Association work: training, dues, funders, grants, etc. Christy will get more information about developing a Business Plan for the Association and be discussed at the fall Association meeting.

Region VIII Head Start Association Report: Minnetta Iron Pipe

The meeting was opened up by President Dr. Donald Carpenter, with a warm welcome from

representatives from Utah, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana and Colorado.

The members all met in their own committee meetings, The organizational Affairs Committee, and Scholarships awards committee talked about they need more time to receive the nominee's from programs. It was also stated that not many programs submitted any names.

Ways and Means committee addressed the concerns of the Wyoming conference did not make enough money as to what was predicted of \$30,000 to \$18,000.00 when all bills were paid. It was also stated if the conferences are not working, since the states has the cluster training. The conferences are not bringing in the money as they use to. It was also stated that if the conferences are stopped Region VIII HS Association will not survive.

Regional issues and Governmental Affairs do a great job lobbying for our programs. As programs they need to join a regional Association to be heard on the hill. Talk of the Utah programs pulling away from the region VIII Association they are writing a letter to have them not pull out. A letter was drafted and sent out to board members to review the letter. There are going to be two positions up on the region VII board the president and treasure, Donald Carpenter and Charlotte Pirnat.

Public relations Training and Technical Assistance, need to advertise more on what the region is doing and who they all send out to the parent conference. They have a strategic plan that needs to be updates that will be addressed next meeting. They want to have all programs put their programs on a pamphlet to show around to other programs, it would be excellent PIR. They are hoping that everyone can attend the conferences.

Again they want to see how the Montana conference planning is going, I did refer this message on to Christy Hill and she was going to give them an up-date.

The by-laws were addressed and just a few changes were made one main concern is the elected board members terms. If a state and program do not pay dues, they cannot run for any position on the Board.

Ross Weaver the Regional Manager give up date on stimulus package for states and head start/early head start programs. But we think that there is still needs a lot of explaining to do on how to receive the money? Is the money going directly to the Programs? The next meeting is in June 2009 in Fargo.

2009 Region VIII/MtAEYC Conference:

The conference committee has been meeting; the conference site has been changed to MSU-B, they will help with the coordination. The conference will be limited to 550 participants. The Keynote speaker is Todd Rowen a motivational speaker and Jack Hartman a musician. The conference will take place on Thursday and Friday October 22nd & 23rd.

Committee Reports:

Finance:

Bank Accounts: Checking balance: \$29,283.29 Money Market Account: \$31,688.33
Regular Saving: \$19,963.22

- Shawna Hopper moved to have money from the checking and/or saving to higher yield CD. Ron Conrad seconded the motion. Motion carried. Patty Dahl will research the options.
- Program dues are still coming in
- \$2.00 per child campaign. A request for donations from programs will be sent out after the dues are collected.
- Individual memberships: Shawna Hooper moved to set the individual membership fees at \$25.00 per year. Renee seconded, motion carried.

Personnel Committee:

- Pam de Rosier moved to give the Director a 4.9% cost of living increase. Renee Funk seconded the motion, Motion carried

Nominating Committee:

- The Early Childhood Project has asked the HS Association to appoint two people from this Board representing both Region VIII and Region XI to the Career Development Advisory Council. Christy will send out an e-mail asking for nominations.

By-laws Committee:

- At January meeting it was decided to allow individual memberships and the by-laws needed to be revised. That one change impacts other areas of the by-laws and the committee needs more time to work on the revisions.

Native American Committee:

- A discussion was held around collaborating more on trainings together among tribal programs. NWI conference could join with Region 8 conference.
- A goal is to have a training on Program Reviews.
- Mental Health - what are programs doing to promote throughout program - staff, parents and children - would like this on the next agenda. What do programs do when intervention is needed now?
- Team Building - need to work together, how do you do team building in your programs, how do you get all the systems linked together and keep them strong?
- Need a better advertising system for trainings - locally, regionally, and nationally.

Governmental Affairs Committee

- Region VIII Association asked that each state make a brochure for their programs so that RA can use in lobbying efforts.

- State HS Bill failed to get out of committee. Rep. Edie McClafferty was a Head Start champion throughout the process and should be thanked. Christy will have a something made acknowledging her work on behalf of Head Start and Early Head Start programs.
- Everyone needs to keep in touch with their legislator's between sessions; develop a relationship with them and keep them informed of early childhood issues and the need for state funding to support Head Start. Invite them to your programs.
- Head Start Day at the Capitol was success.
- Please continue to contact Senators Baucus and Tester's offices. They need to be thanked for voting for the stimulus package, let them know how you are using the money (salary increases, benefits, retaining staff, etc.) A letter will be sent from the Association.
- Montana Advocates for Children and the 2009 Session: Managed to achieve all of the legislative goals.

T/TA Committee:

- Christy and Melinda will work on a survey, look at brining CLASS training to Montana and investigate IMIL training and what programs are interested.
- Christy will send this year's wage survey out again and check with Billings about the 2009 Survey.

Proceeds from the Raffle: \$200.00

Next Meeting Dates:

September 10-11, 2009 Missoula
 January 21-22, 2010 Butte/Anaconda
 April 8-9, 2010 Great Falls

- A discussion took place around canceling meetings because of weather. Meetings will not be canceled.

Patty asked for comments on the meeting and suggestions for the next agenda.

Presentation on Team Building for the Board

Information on in-kind

Mental Health

Build in networking time

Everyone appreciated Ross Weaver's presentation.

The hospitality from the Lewistown program was outstanding.