

MEETING MINUTES

Great Start Collaborative

August 14, 2008

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Lincoln Elementary School



ATTENDANCE: G. Balcita, B. Rayl, P. Girard, M. Shore, M. Kanser, D. Rickman, P. Smith, L. Bush, K. Clark, J. Nichols, K. Hoszkiw, B. Timmons, A. Walker, G. Smith, B. Davis, K. Schiller, J. Lamphere, S. Weber, M. Cunningham-DeLuca, S. Butters

MEETING SUMMARY

PARENT COALITION REPORT

- A summary of the Parent Liaison's July activity was provided within the meeting packet
- Sheri gave a brief summary of the picnic held on Aug. 12th.

IMAGINATION LIBRARY UPDATE

- Two reports were provided showing the increase in participation over the past three months as well as the distribution of books by zip code
 - Approximately 1,425 children have registered to date
 - The Parent Coalition will focus on promoting Imagination Library in rural Jackson County once school reconvenes
- J. Lamphere made an Imagination Library presentation to the Michigan Center Rotary Club in July and was invited to submit a request for funding to their group. Based upon this, a few members of the Values Committee have drafted a funding request letter which will be mailed from the Executive Committee to various local clubs, civic organizations, and businesses.
- A discussion was held regarding the receipt of donations that are not designated for a particular Imagination Library Fund (Endowment vs. operational funds). The group decided that the dollars should flow into the endowment fund for the time being, as there are sufficient funds to cover the invoicing of books.

CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

- The Collaborative will soon be receiving quarterly reports from Child Care Network regarding the status of the scholarships
 - Eight parents (one is Legacy student) have been identified and are in the process of completing the application packets
 - It is hoped the remaining three scholarships will flow to parents of young children who do not live within the city of Jackson

ENDOWMENT REPORT

- The Collaborative will be receiving endowment statements in six-month intervals; the first will be distributed this fall
 - Funding has been received from the Vandercook Lake Lions Club (\$200) and we anticipate a donation on behalf of Best Buy (\$1,000) very soon.

2008-09 GRANT APPLICATION

- A draft budget was provided for Collaborative review
 - It was noted that the matching funds listed represent the Early Childhood endowment dollars at the Community Foundation
 - Minimal changes were made in the budget from last year's funding; most noteworthy is the addition of a part-time clerical support for the Great Start Coordinator.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- VALUES COMMITTEE
 - The group is fully constituted and all goals and objectives have been assigned to committee members
 - The Committee will be leveraging recent Imagination Library contributions to promote continued support within the business community
 - A suggestion was made to use Letters to the Editor in conjunction with press releases to maximize coverage
 - The Committee is continuing to look for employers such as Best Buy that match their employees volunteer hours with direct cash contributions
- AWARENESS COMMITTEE
 - The group is in the process of writing this year's Community Report Card. This document will be simplified compared to last year's, which was highly comprehensive but not well read by the general public.
 - Bullet points will be used and readers will be directed back to the web site for additional information and to participant in a community survey
 - Reports will most likely be distributed in Kids in Common vs. the Citizen Patriot and a handful via direct mail
 - The Born Learning Trail will not be installed at Cascades Park due to logistic issues. The committee will begin discussions with Partnership Park Neighborhood Association.
 - It was suggested that the committee put together a response team to navigate the recent negative press surrounding DHS and other newsworthy items. This team would be able to represent Great Start as leaders and experts surrounding matters of early childhood within the community.
 - It was also suggested that the website be updated to respond to current topics
- READY TO LEARN COMMITTEE
 - The State has not yet posted the RFP for a local Daycare Quality Rating System; this is being held up due to concerns over budget items that allow for flexibility within the local program.
 - It is still unclear to the committee whether to approach this as experts providing information on best practices or to develop an actual system
 - FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING PROPOSAL: This document was presented for approval, and the following points were discussed-
 - The ISD, in conjunction with local school districts, are going to begin implementing a program this fall that will "tag" children and track their progress in school beginning with kindergarten entry. This will eventually be expanded to include preschoolers.

- The program will take approximately three years to fully implement
 - A baseline assessment will be given as children enter kindergarten which will allow interested parties to track progress both backward and forward in time
 - Most of the assessors are speech therapists
 - This project is highly labor intensive and is quickly becoming more expensive than originally anticipated
 - A parent survey will be used to flag Imagination Library participants
 - A motion was made by B. Rayl to approve the proposal and seconded by G. Balcita with no dissent or further discussion from the group. Motion carried.
- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
 - Finance Report Project
 - The Committee is struggling to finish the report due to lack of cooperation and response from the USDA and numerous local programs (list attached in packet)
 - K. Clark will work with S. Butters to see if the data required can be obtained at the State level through Rep. Griffin's office.

GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP SURVEYS

- All Collaborative members were highly encouraged to complete their Board of Directors' surveys prior to leaving the meeting
 - Surveys will be mailed directly to B. Millett
 - Respondents were also encouraged to be as candid as possible

MISCELLANEOUS

- M. Belknap suggested (via email) the Collaborative provide the publication *Growing Child* as a handout to parents of young children—possibly through Dr. offices?
- Members were encouraged to attend the Aug 25 (7:00 PM @ Jackson High) presentation by Jamie Vollmer
 - Jamie will be presenting to all community educators and will be helping to promote Great Start and the early childhood agenda
- Likewise, it was noted that Dr. Cooper, who will be presenting in the area on 10/17, has developed a coordinated school model in New Orleans and will be coming to share his work. This presentation is sponsored by Great Start and all members are encouraged to attend.
 - Dr. Cooper's model includes a tagging system which tracks children from birth – age 23.

Next Meeting:

- ***The next Great Start Collaborative meeting will be held on September 11, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM at Lincoln. This will be our Implementation Year 1/Year 2 Planning Session with Bill Millett.***