

Great Start Collaborative of Jackson County
Board Evaluation and Collaborative Planning Session
9-11-08
154 W. Clark St., Rm 8
7:30am-12pm

Members Present:

Bill Rayl
Renee Marks
Lori Bush
Sharmaine Balcita
Mike Shore
Sara Benedetto
Sara Tackett
Kathy Hoszkiw
Chlorita Connor
Kellie Schiller
Gloria Smith
Jeanette Lamphere
Nancy Tuckey
Jessica Embury
Kathy Miller
Jeannie Nichols
Ann Thompson
Mike Kanser
Mary Cunningham-Deluca
Shanise A. Davenport
Sheri Butters

Next meeting: Dr. Cooper Presentation, October 17, 2008, 9am with work groups after lunch

I. Announcements

Sherri announced updates on by laws to the board. There were revisions to membership guidelines, attendance changes, members can now name an alternate attend meeting on their behalf, voting rights discussed, voting rights can be removed if board member does not have regular attendance, and parent membership terms are limited to provide a fresh perspective to the board and better represent a broader parent base. Financial revisions to executive board and was supported by all. The website is up and running with current calendar information for parents.

II. Discussion

Value:

Scholarships are provided for Child Care through Child Care Network. Imagination Library currently has 1500+ children enrolled receiving free books. As enrollment increases, so does the need for sustainable funding. The goal is to get at least two more companies to contribute money in the next year. The following companies have contributed money Dawn Food's, Best Buy, Vandercook Lake Lions Club.

Ready to Learn:

Quality Rating System will be tabled for future discussion. ECIC has developed recommendations for a quality rating system using stars to define the quality of child care. There is currently no funding to explore this further and no support from ECIC to fund this.

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Training opportunities for parents and other information will be available on the Great Start website. The website will provide families with a place to get information on all early childhood events. The goal is to use the calendar to provide information on parent education workshops from all agencies. At the last meeting the Collaborative approved the Foundation for Early Learning assessment for 08-09 kindergarteners. The database will assign each kindergartener with a UIC/UIN that will allow us to track students from pre-k through 12.

Awareness: To provide a clear concise culturally competent message that brings awareness to the importance of investing in the future of Jackson County through the Great Start Collaborative. The message can be in written or verbal form. Develop talking points for all members.

A local family was highlighted in the new 2008 Early Childhood Report Card. Local photos will continue to be used in all Collaborative materials to give the local face to early childhood. Registration for Imagination Library can be done through 211.

Guest Speaker: Bill Millett

Things to look at/examine concerning what makes a good board and results of our Board surveys:

What is the message you sending to business sector?

What are we trying to change?

Are you appealing to families with children?

How are you different?

What kind of organization is Great Start?

Clash of Cultures

Strange outside—working good on the inside

Great foundation—works well on the inside

Bad foundation

Members need to fully engage—not the job of the Director to do everything

Great discussion including healthy debate

Respectfully agree to disagree

Bill Millett gave a report detailing the results of the Board Survey he had provided to the Collaborative members in preparation for the evaluation and strategic planning session. Only 16 surveys were returned. Bill expressed his disappointment in the poor return. The results will be used to help grow and develop the organization and can't do that effectively if not all members are engaged.

Prior to the meeting Bill reviewed the progress of the Collaborative to day and had the following suggestions: Bill suggested that the collaborative focus on how The Great Start Collaborative will change the work force of Jackson County in the next fifteen to twenty years. Specifically, be practical in the message, but still need to have an edge on your competitors—focus on what makes you different. The vision needs to be revised to reflect key buzz words and the strategic plan should not be the same as other counties. It was noted that the vision had been revised in March 2008 to reflect the economic impact of investing in early childhood.

Bill outlined how the vision, mission and the goals should work for the organization. He explained the purpose of objective is to achieve the vision and mission of the

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organization. The vision needs to inspire and appeal to all audience members. The organization needs to focus on measurable and meaningful goals. Accountability ensures change, not just action for the organization and the county.

Bill shared that the New American Foundation is investing in early childhood education. Fight Crime Invest in Kids focuses on the link between high school drop out and criminal behavior. It was discussed that local companies are resistant to give money due to struggling economy. He suggested a strong focus on work force development for the future as a selling point.

Following Bill's presentation of his evaluation of our Collaborative work members broke out into groups to evaluate the progress of each subcommittee (Awareness, Value and Ready to Learn) for the past year and to develop strategies and objectives for Year Two.

III. Roundtable

Community Value Report:

The group evaluating the progress of the Value committee shared these findings:

- Define environment and percentage of communities impacted.
- How can we measure an increase in family focused event?
- What has been done about the prison population?
- Need to adjust the language and adjust target date.
- Need to references to the parent coalition.
- What happened to the parent mentoring program?
- Where there barriers?
- The organization did a good job in the number of events attended and working on measurement tool.
- Need to include more key public figures in the community to the board.
- Establish a relationship with local law enforcement and attend community events.

The Star Power Rally was a success with three parents and five board members present. Ways to get the message out about the organization is through Child Care Network providing quarterly newsletter, kids in common, direct mail, and 211. Recognize opportunities to make contact with key people in an attempt to build relationships. The solution was to attend local volunteer fairs throughout the community.

The priorities set by the group were:

- engage more with local businesses,
- getting law enforcement involved,
- getting PTO's and parents more involved.
- rework the marketing strategy to include publicity with Jackson Magazine and other publications

Awareness:

The group evaluating the Awareness committee had these findings:

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- Identify most important segments with a focus on increasing funding
- Focus on 4-5 segments to increase funding
- Increase key support of stakeholders through expansion of Great Start Membership
- Increase money to fund early childhood education
- Set-up the board as experts on early childhood by keeping in consistent contact with local media
- E-mail and call reporters regularly
- Respond to issues within 24 hours with a phone call, letter or e-mail
- Monthly press release to create a relationship with the media outlets
- Create a slogan of about eight to nine words
- Measure all results by money
- Not the responsibility of Great Start to shape 211 to fit the needs of Great Start
- 211 will be utilized to register children for Imagination Library

Ready to Learn:

The group evaluating the work of the Ready to Learn committee had these findings:

- Redefine data in terms of times, money and child care openings
- Need to explore geography to determine need for child care—based on total vacancy there does not appear to be a need for expanded child care
- 160 child care providers are not using a curriculum
- What is the incentive of using a rating system? More work needed here
- Most child care providers are using their own curriculum
- Need to sell the message of valuing education as it pertains to the Jackson economy