

**Great Start Collaborative  
Executive Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, September 27, 2007  
9:00am-11:00am**

**Location: Lincoln Room 24**

**Present:**

- Alice Walker, *Parent*
- Annette Anulewicz, *Parent*
- Gino Balcita, *Parent*
- Valerie Ott, *Parent*
- Jason Ashenfelter, *Parent*
- Bethany Timmons, *United Way*
- Mary Cunningham-Deluca, *Community Action Agency*
- Honorable Diane Rappleye, *Probate Judge*
- Kathy Hoszkiw, *Child Care Provider, ABC Academy*
- Kelley Kuhn, *Community Member*
- Mike Kanser, *Business Member, Consumers Energy*
- Tom Webster, *Michigan School Readiness Advisory Council*
- Mary Belknap, *K-16 Community Representative, Jackson Community College*
- Tanda Reynolds, *Department of Human Services*
- Sara Benedetto, *Center for Family Health*
- Jan Maino, *Jackson Community Foundation*
- Chlorita Conner, *Faith Based Representative, Lily Missions Center*
- Bill Rayl, *Business Member, Jackson Area Manufacturers Association*
- Janet Seitz, *Early Care Professional Development, MSU Extension*
- Jean Lee, *Health Department, Early On*
- Rev. Douglas Krengel, *Faith Based, Trinity Lutheran Church*

**Excused:**

- Nancy Tuckey, *K-16 Community, Jackson Public Schools*

**Agenda Items:**

**1. Introductions**

Mary Cunningham DeLuca welcomed everyone and members present introduced themselves. Mary shared with everyone that Kristin Klug had received a promotion within the Head Start program and that Sheri Butters has been selected as the new Great Start Coordinator.

**2. Jackson Legacy Business and Education Summit/Jamie Vollmer Report**

Mary Cunningham-DeLuca gave a brief report on the day's events and highlighted a statement made by Jamie Vollmer that today's schools are safe. Children are actually safer when they are in school than at home. Mary also shared that Great Start and Legacy will develop a strong partnership in the future. Comments from members in attendance:

- Bethany Timmons felt that the focus of the event was centered more on Legacy than Great Start
- Bill Rayl observed that there were mostly educators in attendance and would have liked to see more representation from the business community.
- Mary noted that we did have almost all superintendents in attendance as well as college presidents.
- Jan Maino pointed out the importance of a comment Jamie Vollmer had made that we need to stop treating each stage separately, specifically; 0-5, K-12, and so on. We need to work together at all stages.

### **3. Parent Coalition Report**

Sheri Butters gave an update on the coalition activities. The coalition is working to develop a Work Plan for the next 12 months that supports the guidelines for the coalition set forth by ECIC. In the next 2 months a committee structure will be put in place for recruitment, outreach, advocacy, education, etc... Recruitment is still a big challenge. Coalition continues to meet monthly. Position of Parent Liaison has not been filled to date. Sheri will continue to fulfill the parent liaison responsibilities until the position is filled.

### **4. Budget Report**

Members were provided with a copy of the Great Start Collaborative budget summary for the next fiscal year. Mary shared that we do have the opportunity to leverage about \$32,000 in additional funds from the ECIC for infrastructure development if we are able to match that amount locally.

### **5. Survey Reports**

Sheri Butters highlighted some of the key points from the parent survey and early childhood provider survey results. These included:

#### Of the Parents Surveyed:

- 42% use some kind of child care, the largest number using a friend or family member.
- 54% said they get information from the internet about needs for their families.
- Almost 50% of parents said they would like to learn positive parenting skills.

- 38% said they wanted access to respite care.
- 94% of children are covered by insurance of some kind
- 53% of respondents are employed (this number is skewed slightly due to a number of stay at home parents who indicated they were unemployed)
- Of those that are unemployed these barriers to finding employment were cited:
  - Low pay
  - Need child care
  - Few jobs in chosen profession
  - Not enough education
  - Have a disability
  - Not enough job experience
  - Need transportation

Comments from members:

- Bethany Timmons asked how our data aligned with the census data already compiled. Sheri shared that this is a summary of the results and had not had time to look at any additional data. Comparison will be made and Sheri will bring that information to our October meeting.

Early Childhood Provider Survey:

- General feedback from the child care providers surveyed included their desire for more training at convenient times and on subjects that were useful and interesting. Providers also shared that parents need more education also.

Comments from members:

- Jan Seitz shared that often the providers are not happy about being required to attend trainings. She also shared that MSU extension does provide trainings and they are often after hours to be convenient.

## **6. Community Conversation Report**

Provided by Jessica Murray, presented by Mary Cunningham-DeLuca. Mary shared that over the last few months 16 Community Conversations had been held with different groups throughout the community. A copy of the written report was given to all in attendance. Representation at these community conversations included parents, members of the business community, human service agencies, health professionals, faith-based, case management workers, therapists, and consumers of services. This report will be made available in the Reports Section on the Great Start Collaborative Website as soon as possible.

Comments from members about Community Conversations:

- Communication:
  - Jan Maino shared that the Community Foundation had conducted some focus groups with the younger crowd and the best way to reach teens and young adults is the internet, especially noted were “MySpace” and similar sites. The Legacy program will have its own “MySpace” page to get information out to young people
- Child Care:
  - Kathy Hoszkiw stated that “high-quality” child care is a double-edged sword; higher quality means higher price and many people can’t or won’t spend the extra money.
- Teen Pregnancy:
  - Mary Cunningham-DeLuca shared that a new teen pregnancy prevention program will be starting in Jackson County.
- Child Abuse:
  - Jason Ashenfelter shared that there was a “Stomp Out Child Abuse” rally today in front of the courthouse.
  - Tanda commented that Jackson County has many challenges contributing to this problem (prison, joblessness, low income, etc...)
  - There are mechanisms in place once abuse is known or suspected, how do we support parents to ensure abuse doesn’t happen?
- High Rate of infant mortality:
  - Sara Benedetto reported that FIMR is looking at this, in 2006 there were 17, many may have been premature and not viable.
  - Tanda stated that Jackson is one of the leaders in this area, not every county has a FIMR. Jackson is proactive, this is an area of success.
  - Safe Sleep continues to be very important and seems to be paying off. 2-4 years since we have had a bona fide SIDS death.

**All of the survey results will be available on the Great Start Website soon.**

## **7. Website and E-News Update**

Sheri Butters shared that the website will be updated to reflect a section for Collaborative News. This section will include meeting minutes, reports, and other

information in PDF format. Members were encouraged to check out the website and provide feedback on the content.

Sheri informed the committee that the e-news letter is in production. The first newsletter should arrive in everyone's e-mail box in the next 2 weeks. Again, feedback is encouraged.

### **8. Strategic Planning Session—Phase 3**

Kelley Kuhn began the strategic planning session by giving a short recap of where we left off at the last meeting. She also asked everyone to think about these three questions:

- How do we address these issues?
- What is our role?
- How do we change the attitude of this group?

Kelley also provided these guidelines:

- Two year time frame—must be tangible and able to accomplish in 2 years
- Shared Vision: It's not how your organization is going to implement the action plan, it's how your organization can integrate the vision into what you already do.
- The people in this room are the individuals who will be responsible for driving this plan in the community.
- Envision the community two years from now—What will it look like?
- Don't set up for failure, can't be everything for everyone.

The committee members were then broken into smaller groups to address one Action Agenda goal, look for repetitions, and things that have been overlooked.

**Final Action Agenda to be provided by Kelley Kuhn.**

### **9. Open Discussion**

Rev. Douglas Kregel voiced concern about the Executive Committee truly being a representative for the community. He also requested a map so we could get a better visual of the layout. Sheri will bring one to the next meeting.

Request was made to bring in Ken Toll from United Way to present on the United Way Strategic Plan. Sheri will contact Ken and request the presentation.

Meeting adjourned.

\*Next meeting—Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at Lincoln School, Room 24, 9-11am.