

GSC Minutes

12/11/2008

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**Great Start Collaborative  
Jackson County**

**Thursday, December 11, 2008**

**9:00am-11:00am**

**Location: Lincoln Head Start, Room 8**

**Present:**

- Chlorita Conner, Lily Missions Center
- Alice Walker, Parent
- Bethany Timmons, *United Way*
- Mary Cunningham-Deluca, *Community Action Agency*
- Sheri Butters, Great Start Collaborative Director
- Ann Thompson, Parent
- Jeanette Lamphere, Great Start Parent Liaison
- Pam Smith, Child Care Network
- Sharmaine Balcita, Parent
- Kathy Hoszkiw, ABC Academy
- Gloria Smith, Jackson County ISD
- Nancy Tuckey, Jackson Public Schools
- Mike Kanser, Consumers Energy
- Sara Tackett, Jackson District Library
- Jan Maino, Jackson Community Foundation
- Michelle Bowersox, Child and Parent Center
- Paige Girard, Allegiance Health
- Bill Rayl, Jackson Area Manufacturing Association
- Irene LeCrone, United Way
- Melissa Davis, Family Service and Children's Aid
- Sara Benedetto, Center for Family Health
- Shanise A. Davenport, Note taker

**Agenda Items:**

**1. Introductions**

Mary Cunningham-Deluca welcomed everyone. Everyone introduced themselves to the group.

**2. Parent Coalition Update- Jeanette Lamphere, Great Start Parent Liaison**

Jeanette shared the November Imagination Library report to the group. Jeanette Lamphere, Sharmaine Balcita, and Gino Balcita attended the Townsend Elementary Festival and registered 22 children for Imagination Library. The group plans to go back to Townsend Elementary for the Open House and Kindergarten Round-Up to register more children for Imagination Library. The group needs help getting Imagination Library supplies out to the community. Three parents attended the Poverty Summit on

November 13, 2008 in Detroit, Michigan. (Gino Balcita, Dalonda, and Chris) The group will be send letters to local and national legislature about the economy in Jackson County and the importance of early childhood.

Coordinated School Health Council's are active in Jackson Public Schools, Townsend, Western Schools, and Paragon. Mary suggested the group needs to implement changes similar to Michigan Center and Northwest Coordinated School Health Model.

Jeanette will meet with Robin Jones from Paragon in January 2009 to begin to develop a plan for implementing CSH at Paragon. In late January 2009 the group is planning a Parent Education/ Parent Appreciation in which they will invite PTA parents. The group's goal is to have three events a year.

The Parent Coalition will also begin sponsoring several infant and preschool age story times at Jackson District Library branches throughout the county. This will allow contact with many stay at home parents. Coalition members will assist with these opportunities to share Imagination Library, the coalition, and the importance of early childhood.

### **3. Early Childhood Challenge Report-Bill Rayl**

Bill attended the ECIC sponsored challenge on November 18, 2008 in Lansing, Michigan. He believes there needs to be a top down model. We are currently building from the top and the bottom. At some point the two have to align. There appears to be a clash of cultures, a lot of dialogue takes place, everyone needs to be aligned on the same mission to create solutions to improve the situation. The challenge is to make the local bodies more diverse to include men, women, minorities, faith based, and the business sector.

### **4. Subcommittee Reports/Discussion**

- **Ready to Learn**

Jackson County ISD is offering professional development opportunities to child care providers. Information is on their website: [www.jcisd.org](http://www.jcisd.org).

- **Foundation for Learning**

Gloria Smith presented the PALS press release which explained over 1,900 children in Jackson County have been tested on seven different components including:

- ❖ Expressive one word vocabulary
- ❖ Individual rhyme
- ❖ Individual beginning sounds
- ❖ Letter sounds
- ❖ spelling
- ❖ Lower case alphabet
- ❖ Pointing

The oral scores and the reading scores were high.

There was a 3 week window to test the children.

There is a great range in the scores across the five categories. These results show that there is a broad spectrum of skill levels in the classrooms. There was diversity in the classrooms.

Individual Beginning Sound had the lowest number of children who met the benchmark. (61.46% of children)

Jackson County ISD is housing the results and Great Start will distribute results to the daycare centers.

During kindergarten round-up parents will be asked if their child has had a preschool experience. This will assist in making sure we have accurate information to look at preschool/non preschool data.

Discussion was raised about adding math to the test next year.

Children can now be tracked to determine the impact that a preschool experience had on their education.

The data is a tool to assist the preschools and daycares to determine what type of professional development is needed for their staff to ensure that children are ready to enter school.

The data is available to each local school district who participated.

Jackson County ISD will help participants to interpret the data.

Jackson County ISD will not do any comparisons among the school districts, preschools and daycares.

Once school districts, preschools, and daycare centers have the data it is up to them to utilize it.

Bethany asked for more information on the results. Specifically, what percentage of children met the benchmarks?, can we look at pre-k/non pre-k? The RTL committee will have more information to present at the Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- **Scholarship Program Update**

Pam Smith shared that 70 people have been screened for the scholarships since September 2008. Some applicants are not enrolled in school which makes them ineligible for the scholarship. A lot of time is spent by intake workers explaining the importance of going back to school. Applicants must provide a short narrative, college transcripts, and employment verification. Many applicants fail to provide all of the necessary documents to process their applications.

6 out of 10 applicants have submitted their paperwork and have been approved. There are only 4 slots left. The information about the scholarship has been sent to Jackson Community College, Baker College, and Spring Arbor University students. To qualify for the scholarship parents must be working, pursuing education, and meet the HUD income guidelines.

The GSC was awarded \$50,000 from CMS Energy to provide scholarships to families in need. This amount will support 10 families to help pay for child care in a licensed setting. Each family who receives the scholarship is awarded \$5,000.

Mary asked to have the demographics for the child care scholarship recipients brought to the next meeting. Sheri will work with Pam to bring to the Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- **Parent Education-Sheri Butters**

Sheri gave a report on the work happening to strengthen parent education in Jackson County. A large group of parent education providers were brought together to establish a plan to build a better network and increase collaboration among providers. As this is already a priority of the GSC and is part of the RTL committee's strategies, Kathy Hoszkiw has agreed to chair a subcommittee that will:

1. conduct an inventory of the current offerings in Jackson County using survey monkey
2. reconvene the parent education providers to share inventory and look at next steps
3. encourage collaboration and communication among providers to ensure parents are aware, participation is at capacity, and avoid duplication
4. ensure opportunities are in line with parent needs

- **Value-Mike Kanser**

Value and awareness have merged together because both groups were doing the same things.

Work plan was condensed from three things down to one thing.

A few areas were identified that did not fit the overall goals of the group.

Overall there is a better focus and a clearer path.

Will meet again before January Great Start meeting.

The group is looking at more ways to develop money.

For the 08 -09 fiscal year \$6,000 will support Imagination Library.

- **Imagination Library-Sheri Butters**

Sheri will e-mail members the zip codes report with a graph.

The growth in the program has leveled off. We aren't seeing the tremendous growth that we saw in the first few months.

More children are graduating from the program, an average of 25-30 each month.

There needs to be an improvement on the number of children from birth to 2 years old who are enrolled in the program.

The database has created new procedures which have slowed down the registration process.

As a result of new postal regulations they have begun using an address verification service. The system will reject the registration of a child and the child has to be

registered again. These children receive their first book and then receive no book until they are re-registered.

Sheri presented the final draft of the Kiwanis grant to the group and will submit the Kiwanis grant in January 2009 pending approval from the GSC. Mary raised the motion, and Sharmaine seconded the motion and all members were in support. There were no concerns about the documents. The grant provides \$60,000 in funds over the next five years.

- **Executive Committee-Bethany Timmons**

How does early childhood impact high graduation rates and college graduation rates?

Bethany motioned to recommend the targets, outcomes and indicators from the Great Start Strategic Plan.

Review request for proposal was approved.

- **Budget-Sheri Butters**

Sheri provided a draft budget report for review detailing the ECIC, Child Care Scholarship and Imagination Library funds. ECIC is \$ 160,000 a year.

Mary mentioned that the CAA Audit results will be presented in March.

Feedback regarding the budget report format included:

- Need more explanation of what items mean.
- Break out cash match items.
- Break down miscellaneous items. Break out the revenue, total, and provide a budget narrative. The next draft of the budget will be sent to the group via e-mail.

## **5. Finance Project-Sheri Butters**

A final report of the local finance project fund mapping process was provided to members. Sheri stressed that these do not give a complete picture of all the money spent for early childhood in Jackson County, rather it provides a broad view of the services and programs in the community and allows us to begin to identify gaps and the need for better coordination. Getting the information for children birth to five years old from DHS and other human service agencies is a problem since they don't collect data this way.

Federal and state spreadsheets show where the gaps are in Jackson County. Jackson County has done a nice job in filling some of these gaps, such as parenting education and child care scholarships, with local and private funds.

Sheri advised the group to e-mail her with any question about the report.

## **6. Open Discussion**

Meeting adjourned

Next meeting: January 8, 2008.

## **Action Items:**

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- Sheri will e-mail the group members a survey concerning whether or not to change the date and times of the meetings. It was suggested the meeting be shortened to one hour or having the meetings start at noon.
- Need more reports on PALS data for meeting.
- Confirm if there is a legacy student who is receiving the Child Care Network Scholarship.
- Determine which daycare centers receive funds from the scholarship.
- Follow-up with providers to see if they are asking families if they are in need of child care assistance.
- Sheri will post the report and spreadsheet on the website.