

MT Head Start Association – January 29 & 30, 2015

Helena, MT

Members Present: Renee Funk, Barb Brophy, Gail Mickey, Carra Godbey, John Filz, Alma Young, Robert Fox, Kendra Mihfeld, Lyn Ohl, Ken Miller, Trista Bigart, Michelle Bowser, Bev Matsko, Ron Conrad, Debbie Richert. Contractor: Mary Jane

Guests: Mary Pierce, Kathy Rich, Terri Barclay, Siri Smiley, Kathy McGowan, Jim Aherns.

Association Update: Mary Jane provided an update – see attached.

Governor Bullock's Early Edge Initiative Update: Siri Smiley – explained early edge is a block grant to school districts to start Pre K. 1st hearing was Joint Education Subcommittee last week, postponed executive action, still time to comment. Bachelor's degree being required seems to be a problem – we should comment. Some committee members do not understand why that would be necessary. Letter of support – do we sign? – MJ needs to let her know. Early Edge will have a task force – Prior Learning Task Force looks at across university system how to honor previous experience and education, demonstrate skills through assessment. Scholarships are part of the Preschool development grant \$500,000 a year for those that are part of that grant. 2.4 million for STARS is included in Gov. budget. HB 305 – protecting children – 3 million – hearing Feb. 2.

Preschool Development Grant – Terri Barclay - OPI – partnership between DPHHS and OPI, both hiring staff to share work load of supervision and coaching in areas of expertise. John is concerned about unequal teacher wages and temporary nature of the grant. Terri acknowledged the concern but said it is exciting that the dialogue and planning are taking place. This grant does target low income and moderate income which is good. Terri asked if there is the same concern in other states. No money for structures but can we at least rent? Child care is concerned. The tendency to forget comprehensive services was also mentioned as a concern.

New Collaboration Director – Kathy Rich introduced Mary Pierce from Colorado, she has disabilities background. She shared the revised priorities for Collaboration office. The upcoming Needs Assessment – will contract with Kids Count, going into fifth year so will be more broad. Kathy Rich is in charge of the DPHHS part of the Preschool Development grant. Kathy needs position descriptions about Family Community Partnership staff. Please send to her at krich@mt.gov

Best Beginnings Advisory Council (BBAC) - Debbie Richert provided a typed report and reviewed the highlights with us - See attached

MAC and Lobbyist Update: Kathy McGowan and Jim Aherns shared their perspective of the session thus far. It is early in the game. They wanted to make sure we had a plan if Early Edge does not get funded. We also have two legislators who are willing and who do have bills regarding Head Start that we need to work with. MJ has made contact with both Arntzen and McClafferty. If our priorities are not funded or being requested, how can we get what we need and want? Keep in contact with Kathy and Jim.

Program Updates:

Kalispell: lots of turnover, training of new people, advocacy – have a good crew of 7 coming tomorrow very active and involved, BB council working with schools on early edge, Read to me Daddy started, limited to 25 dads, found a great retired person, is very successful. Have a smaller than usual waiting list of over 100 but 75% are over income, switching to 4 hour instead of 3.5, working on converting one classroom to full day.

Glendive: changing to 5 yr grant, oil industry changing things from waning to waxing,

Anaconda: in DRS, staying level for now, large waiting list

Great Falls: - lots of turn-over, no qualified applicants, EHS/CC partnership grant, 5yr grant submitted Dec. 1. Have had some opportunities to educate about HS at different community groups and events.

Ravalli: in the middle of 5 yr grant, lots of turnover, recruiting HS alumns for 50 yr celebration.

Bozeman: In 3rd year of 5 yr grant, not fully enrolled, lots of turnover, 14 of 16 teachers are new, have asked for enrollment reduction and changing to EHS some slots.

Whole system is moving away from good communication, towards stealth monitoring, lack of good relationships,

Lewistown: Have had lots of turnover but asked how is turnover affecting management? They lost veteran staff, MT Striving Readers (MSRG) and Preschool Development grant, growth in child find, fully enrolled, have wait lists but very few are really eligible. Bought buttons for staff and made presentations to community organizations.

Fort Belknap: very little staff turnover. Local community college coordinates & schedules with the HS staff, In DRS for CLASS – had follow up in May and submitted 5 yr grant in Nov. Now fully enrolled, no waiting list, 50th Anniversary – recruit alumni to speak and celebrate at event in May.

Young Families – Blgs EHS – full, long waiting list, 2nd yr of a 5 yr grant but have to rewrite, community assessment, using Head Start key indicators (hski-c) , hosted a wonderful fund raiser –Farm to Fork – got families involved.

Havre: turnover especially in EHS, struggling with enrollment with 4 year olds, asking current families to refer a family, during intake, if they mention the referring family, they are put in a drawing. New classroom in Hillview.

Butte: staff turnover, kid turnover, 2nd yr of 5 yr , hski-c and health/safety review.

Region 8 Office & TTA Update:

TTA - Darcy – Leadership Conference in Feb, May and June making plans with programs,

Fiscal – new IM on property, webinar on Feb. 12 on super circular

Program Specialists - Cheryl - 2 new program specialists, 4 in DRS in Region 8, none in MT. Need to request a waiver if they do not have their 10% disabilities, teacher qualification waivers – let us know the status, appreciation to all for good work,

Region 8 TTA report for MT - written from Lisa Murphy, she was on vacation and could not be present – see attached.

ACTION: Region 8 Conference profit split – consensus given to take out my expenses then give 50% split
NHTSA – conduit for scholarships

Topics for April: Director’s Retreat, Professional Development, cluster mtgs, program reviews, update/review Leadership mtg in Denver, recruiting more programs as members and attending. Committees do not need to be committees but can be sections on the agenda, decisions made and if needed can be ad hoc temporary committees.

It was suggested that the terminology be updated regarding the title of the Family Engagement Cluster instead of Family Services. Maybe we should drop the “cluster” terminology and start referring to these sessions as Staff Networking Sessions - Health Staff, Early Childhood Staff, Family Engagement Staff, Fiscal Staff, Nutrition Staff, Disabilities Staff, etc. Any thoughts or suggestions??

Next Meeting: April 9 & 10, 2015 in Butte. (Calendar is attached for meetings and clusters (staff networking sessions) and other events in 2015 and it is posted on the website www.mtheadstart.org)

Summary of Head Start Day at the Capitol – the program displays were impressive, beautiful, good variety, but missing Tribal programs. We had lots of people from the Capitol and many legislators that meandered through, about 60–70 in attendance. We had many parents, 1 staff person and one school district person get up and spontaneously testify to the strengths of Head Start. Governor, Superintendent, Director of DPHHS and Collaboration Director all did a great job presenting, being on time and making it all very official. The crew from Helena cannot be thanked enough for their help in setting up and cleaning up and managing the food table throughout the time. Thank you, thank you. It is very inspiring and so encouraging to see all of you wanting everyone to know what you do and how your work is successful. I hope you will continue to keep having these events to honor staff and parents and keep raising awareness. It is so important to be present – in your neighborhood, your community and/or at the Capitol. Thank you!!