

Eaton County's GREAT START Collaborative

Minutes: August 27, 2007

Eaton County's GREAT START Collaborative met in regular session on August 27, 2007. Ronda Rucker, Collaborative Coordinator, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. She explained that State Representative Rick Jones would be arriving towards the end of the meeting with a donation of books and representatives of the media would be arriving for photographs.

Each participant introduced herself and shared "why early childhood is an important issue."

The agenda was approved as presented by consensus of those present.

Election of GREAT START Collaborative Chairperson:

The following members were nominated for the position of Chairperson of the Collaborative:

1. Laurie Newland — nominated by Mona Ellard, with support from Kimmi Mead.
2. Joyce Bomyea-Nickel — nominated by Debra Williamson, with support from Kim Estes.
3. Nikki Selech — nominated by Debra Williamson, supported by Joyce Bomyea-Nickel.

A motion was offered to close the nominations and call the vote, this was supported by Charlene Cunningham. Laurie withdrew her name from the proposed slate. Tricia Abbott moved to elect the remaining two candidates as co-Chairpersons. This was supported by Kim Estes. The motion was approved. Congratulations Joyce and Nikki!

Data from the recent **parent survey** conducted at the Eaton County Fair in July was reviewed. It was concluded that although this cannot be considered a scientifically valid survey, it does provide a picture of a specific period of time at a specific location. The information gathered is encouraging. The Program and Services Committee has suggested that the survey be repeated at additional locations.

The Website Sub-Committee, consisting of D'Lynn, Donna, Kim Estes, Debra, Arina, and Ronda, has met and several areas of the site are now up and functional. Some areas are still under construction. Ronda informed the Collaborative body that the consultant, Gary Vittoz, has done a great job and has been extremely helpful. She further advised the group that members can add their own contact information to the List Serve if they accidentally remove their addresses. Also, she can no longer attach information, but must send out announcements and information within the body of the message. The address for the **website** is: <http://eatongreatstart.org/> Arina is compiling operating guidelines for the website.

The "**Benchmarks**" document has not as yet been approved by the Human Services Collaborative. It will be acted on at the next scheduled meeting of that group.

A sub-committee of the Program and Services Committee has been working to develop a training on **Family Violence Awareness for daycare providers**. The five hour training will be offered on October 9 and October 16, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the First Lutheran Church in Charlotte. More information will be made available in the near future.

The **“Priority Framework for a Comprehensive Early Childhood System”** is being updated by the Program and Services Committee.

Arina moved to approve the **“Continuation Work Plan for October 2007 through January 2008.”** Mona supported the motion, which was approved by the Collaborative members. A budget will be developed by Ronda and EISD staff to match and accompany the Work Plan.

The **Community Report** Sub-Committee, Cana Garrison, Mindy, Mona, Joni, and Ronda, has developed a draft report utilizing the E.C.I.C. format. They have introduced pictures of local individuals, plus Eaton County data and information into the report.

Four suggestions to clarify the information within the report surfaced in the ensuing discussion:

- 1 The need to re-word the title of the live birth chart.
- 2 The need to add the term “substantiated” to the child abuse graph.
- 3 The suggestion to eliminate of the graph outlining parental reading practices.
- 4 The need to clarify the childcare graph.

Colette moved to approve the Community Report with the four suggested changes, pending further review by additional readers. Mona supported the motion. Which was approved. Donna, Arina, Colette, and Kim Estes will be the follow-up readers of the updated report to ensure clarity to readers.

The Community Report will be presented at “Community Conversations” in the near future. The conversations can be held within any group comprised of parents of children ages 0 - 12 years-of-age. Cindy offered Toddler Time groups, Laurie suggested Rotary Club and the GFWC. Lois suggested Head Start in Eaton Rapids. Kim mentioned the MOPS groups. Ronda will be working on a statement regarding the purpose of the meetings and will develop a time frame and agenda. Collaborative members were asked to help facilitate the sessions.

To work on Collaborative priorities, the group divided into five teams and brainstormed goals for each of the following categories:

- Basic Needs, Economic Security and Child Safety
- Physical Health Care
- Social-Emotional Health Care
- Parenting Education and Family Support
- Early Care and Education

Laurie Newland, Cindy, D’Lynn, Arina, and Debra will meet to compile the goals as developed at the meeting into a format which can be used at the Community Conversations. Mona suggested that due to the amount of work to be done and the need

to complete this project within a specific time period, another, special, meeting of the Collaborative be held. It was decided that a meeting will be held on September 24, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

At this time Rep. Jones arrived with his book donation. The regular meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. Ronda and Rep. Jones spoke with a news reporter regarding the book donation. Next Collaborative meeting is scheduled for September 24, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debra Williamson