

Early Childhood Connections - Eaton County's Great Start Collaborative
Great Start Collaborative Council

Minutes: August 31, 2009

Present: Anne Barna, Dale Barr, Amanda Burch, Lois Cairns, Charlene Cunningham, Kalli Dempsey, Rachelle Gorton, Christine Gottleber, William Kennedy, Alison Kulas, Shelly Miller, Laurie Newland, Ronda Rucker, Heather Sanders, Nikki Selleck, Nancy Sherd, D'Lynn Smith, Donna Turner, Cindy Van Neste, Debra Williamson

Nikki welcomed everyone and facilitated member introductions. The agenda was approved as presented. June 2009 minutes were accepted with a motion introduced by Heather, along with support from Dale Barr.

Infrastructure:

1) Evaluating Our Collaborative – Cindy and Nikki recently experienced a training on evaluating the progress of a Great Start Collaborative. The basic questions that such an evaluation can answer are: “how are we doing?” and “where are we going?” They plan to develop a questionnaire, based on the training. Once the survey has been administered and tabulated, they will provide a report to the full body.

2) Review of Structure – This item was tabled until after the above survey data is reviewed.

3) Action Agenda Progress – A detailed annual review of the GSC Action Agenda accomplishments was initiated. See attached document for the review comments and actions.

4) Collaborative Structure – New members are needed for the Executive Committee. Anyone interested should contact Ronda
Members were asked to review the current sub-committee structure for possible gaps, as the GSC will utilize the categories on the ECIC Star logo to re-organize committees. A work-task was initiated to categorize agencies, individuals, and programs into the new structure.

5) Meeting Dates – Due to the need to complete the above tasks in a timely manner, it was determined that the next GSC meeting will be held on September 28, with the regularly scheduled October 26 meeting to follow. No meeting will be held in November or December.

6) Election of Officers – The election of officers for the next fiscal year was postponed due to funding uncertainties at the current time. A motion to postpone the election was forwarded by D'Lynn, with support from Nancy Sherd.

Reporting by STAR areas:

1) Pediatric and Family Health –

- a) Anne Barna reported on “Right Start” birthing statistics from Eaton County data.
- b) With September being “Safe Sleep Month,” the following has been planned for the local area: several display locations; brochures and poster being placed near changing tables; a news release; mailings to churches; and information included in “Baby Bags.”
- c) Tickets to the upcoming professional development on poverty, based on the work of Dr. Ruby Payne, were distributed.

2) Child Care and Early Education –

- a) Ronda reviewed the results of the “Kindergarten Teacher Survey” recently implemented and reported on by ECIC.
- b) Laurie N. reported that Charlotte Public Schools have developed an “Early Education Learning Community” initiative.
- c) A discussion followed about the successes of all-day kindergarten programs.

3) Parenting Leadership –

- a) Nikki shared that over 500 letters supporting early education were collected and sent to legislators at the Eaton County Fair. She said that senior citizens were noticeably supportive.
- b) The Parent Coalition has a meeting scheduled for September 1 to complete Coalition planning and goals statements.
- c) A second meeting is scheduled for September 28. A speaker on “school readiness” will present to the group.

4) Social and Emotional Health -

5) Family Support –

- a) The Website Committee has recently reviewed and updated the GSC website. The website will continue to be funded through the ECIC during the next fiscal year.

Partner Sharing:

Building Strong Families/ Donna: Donna shared teethingers with the group, for distribution to mothers of infants.

Barry Eaton District Health Department/ Heather: Heather shared updates on the H1N1 vaccine. She also introduced Alison Kulas, a new Health Educator, who spoke about the upcoming suicide risk professional development opportunity.

GSC/Early Childhood Connections/ Cindy: A “Car Seat Safety Check” will be held on October 13 at the Charlotte Fire Department, reported Cindy.

Head Start/ Lois: Three new classrooms are scheduled for Waverly/Grand Ledge, as well as one in Olivet and one in Bellevue. Head Start classes will begin on September 16.

The meeting was adjourned by a consensus of members. The next GSC Meeting is scheduled for September 28 at the Charlotte Assembly of God, at 12 noon.