

**RMDC, Inc. Head Start
Policy Council Meeting
March 13, 2008**

Friends of Head Start: Mary Ellen Holverson and Ann Mary Norton of the “Friends of Head Start” spoke to the PC and Classroom Reps before the PC meeting began to explain what the “Friends of Head Start” group is, how it came to be, what the purpose was, and to ask how we all thought they could support Head Start parents as well. They may ask for more information later.

PC meeting began at 6:00 p.m. Members Present: Magalie Belanger, Jay Bowen, Patrice Longfellow, Jena Grubb, Sheryl Eriksen, Sandy Hugus, Sara Terou, Laura Smith (class rep in HS 12) filling in for Andrea Edgar, Martha Finley, Dawn Ruiz, Dianne Alvarez, Gina Marker, Jodi Marsh, Bryce Taylor, Cristie Burnette, Dr. Kevin Rencher, and Twila Harrington.

Members Excused: Tom Dwyer, Heather Morris, Belinda Shoemaker-Tomlinson

Members Unexcused: Dawn Ruiz

Guests: Patty Dahl, Mary Ellen Holverson, Ann Mary Norton, Janet Coughlin

Jena Grubb did roll call. A quorum was established after roll call was taken.

Review of Ground Rules/Agenda Review: Reviewed all the ground rules and agenda review. Gina offered her leadership team position to other parents but if no one was available she would stay in touch with Leadership Team via the minutes. (Andrea Edgar has not been able to attend either.)

Approval of last meetings Minutes: Correction in Treasurer’s report (the word *the*). Add Tom Dwyer to Treasurers Report. Minutes approved by all.

Treasurer’s Report: Spring Fundraiser incentives, money to class-rooms, staff appreciation: Patty reported in Tom Dwyer’s absence. She handed out the March Financial Report and said the Parent Fund Accounting sheets are available for review. She Balance as of end of January: \$49,860. For February - Spent: \$1,914.97 Deposited: \$5,538.51 Current Total: \$53,484.02

There are still fundraiser candles and diffusers available for sale from our winter fundraiser.

Spring Fundraiser Incentives: The Executive Committee decided to do a pizza party at the bowling alley for the classroom that sells the most. For the family that sells the most – they can choose a \$100 gift certificate to a place suited to their need and location. We voted on these decisions and they were approved. The fundraiser will end on the 1st of April and products should come 2 weeks later.

Money to the classrooms: Money increased from \$40 to \$50 for the fall. It was suggested to give another \$50 to classrooms and this was approved by everyone. Classrooms will have a choice on how to use it – for year end field trips, graduations, parties, etc.

Kindergarten gift certificates: For many years now the Parent Fund has presented each child going on to kindergarten a gift certificate to help purchase school supplies. Last year the amount was \$10 for each child and the certificate was good at Kmart in Helena or Butte. Members approved \$10 gift certificates for Kmart again this year.

Parent Fund CD: Members voted to roll over the parent fund CD for another six months and to find out from Tom (Dwyer) if he could get better interest rates.

Head Start Enrollment Criteria and Classroom Placement: Janet Coughlin, Family and Community Partnerships Manager, went over the Enrollment Criteria: Eligibility and Acceptance and Classroom Placement that we received in our packets. She said that what is in “red” is what is proposed to be added, strikes are what is being proposed to take out. She reported that “homeless families” will now be automatically eligible for Head Start with the new reauthorization. Families receiving public assistance (SSI or TANF) have always been automatically eligible. She reviewed the rest of the proposed policies – Head Start is mandated to serve 10% of its funded openings for children with disabilities. Children age eligible for public school will be considered for Head Start enrollment on an exceptional basis if kindergarten isn’t recommended. The program’s point system will be used to enroll families who are most at risk. Full day option changes: ELC site preference is given to HHA residence and receiving childcare subsidy. Main Street site preference is given to residents of East Helena and receiving childcare subsidy. Verification of activities will occur two times a year. After questions and discussion members voted to approve the Enrollment Criteria Policy: Eligibility and Acceptance and Classroom Placement.

United Way Grant: Patty reported that the United Way grant was due March 11th so she had asked the executive committee to approve her submitting it for \$8,300 and they did. Tonight she asked that the full PC ratify the decision and it was approved. She said that United Way has given us two checks this year for about \$386 each and we will get one more. Even though Head Start was not in the United Way funding stream this year, they considered Head Start worthy and gave us some money.

RMDC Board Report: Twila Harrington gave the Board report. The Board meeting was on the 15th of Feb. RMDC’s 2007 retirement contribution was approved. The Pay Plan update was reviewed and the Personnel Committee will meet to make a decision. Eagle Manor has received HUD approval. There was an update on Public Relations at Rocky, an update on RSVP and Home Delivery program grants.

Head Start Director’s Report : Patty showed us the “Nutrition Nuggets” that comes home every month attached to the menus. She said that our nutritionist, Lin Pasch wanted to know if we felt it was beneficial. PC felt it was so it will be continued.

The tri-county school readiness team will have an event in the Capitol Rotunda (Reading in the Rotunda) April 17.th United Way will contribute \$1,000 for books. She encouraged folks to take their children to the rotunda or to school or public libraries for the reading events that will happen during the Week of the Young Child.

Patty reported that the topic of mental health may be coming to PC soon. She asked Gina to talk about what the Early Childhood Development & Disabilities Advisory Team has been working on. She said that the team has been working on getting a mental health program in place for next fall.

Patty reported that as of this week, \$1,275.97 from Head Start children, families, staff, and Board has been deposited into the Pennies for Progress campaign. She said that the goal of \$100,000 has been exceeded. All Head Start classrooms participated. The buses were a hit and there are many left. Betsy Baur was the chairperson for the Pennies for Progress campaign and it was suggested to send her a Thank You.

The Spring Picnic will be May 21st. The PC approved \$50 for a cleaning deposit for the picnic and \$55 for the event itself to be paid out of the parent fund.

Patty said she will begin reporting other info to us as required by re-authorization. In February, 3,232 meals for kids, 1,444 meals for adults were served. Bus rides- one bus did 648 rides, one did 726, and one did 1,096. Her RMDC Credit Card has a \$2,000 limit. This past month \$169.24 was charged on the credit card for books from Amazon. No interest is paid on the credit card because the balance is paid right away. Patty handed out a re-authorization article that she thought would be understandable. The board must have a member with an early childhood background (experience) and a parent member. Gina volunteered to be on the Family Literacy Coalition. Expense to Budget Comparison- Spending is mainly the same each year.

Patty handed out the monthly budget report for the end of January and explained it in detail. We have spent \$1,458,879 to the end of January. For Feb, March, and April, we have \$564,523 to spend. The City of Helena must pay back some of the money (about \$4,000) for bus driver office space, phone, network, and bus payment. We know we will be overspent because expenses have increased but funding has not. Patty and Pam from fiscal will review the budget again as soon as the February statement of operations is out to determine about what our over-expenses will be. (When they did it in January it was about \$31,000.) Attendance for February was 86% overall. Patty handed out the grant amendment for using the remainder of one time funds.

Staff Appreciation: \$500 was approved by PC.

Meeting Evaluation: Pluses: Good attendance, good dinner, good information, good decisions, productive, good time keeper. Wishes: Better (at staying on) time.

Next Meeting: April 17th, 2008

Jena Grubb, Chairperson

Gina Marker, Secretary