

**RMDC, Inc. Head Start
Policy Council Meeting
January 15, 2009**

Prior to the Policy Council meeting starting there was a joint information sharing session with the Policy Council members, Class Reps, and the Head Start staff. Items that were discussed were:

Patty started the meeting with everyone doing introductions. In attendance were Crystie Burnette, Amy Thiel, Ashlee Salisbury, Christina Gwinn, Monica Corrigan, Sara Miller, Sara Cook, Autumn Jones, Sandy Hugus, Twila Harrington, Magalie Belanger, Gina Marker, Jay Bowen, Sue Prout, Molly Murphy, Camille Murphy, Janette Skaggs, Roselyn Staley, and Jennifer Casey.

Monday between 9 & 11, there is a meeting for testimony to the state to try to increase the state minimum for childcare. Patty encouraged parents to participate in some way, whether providing live testimony or via letter to get your voice heard. PC and Reps were asked to contact her if you would like to testify.

MAC (Montana Advocates for Children) will be sponsoring their Legislative Breakfast from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Thursday, January 22nd. That is open to all the PC members and Class Reps.

January 30, 2009 is Head Start Day at the capitol beginning at Noon. Parents are encouraged to attend. There will be an opportunity to talk to other Head Start parents from around the state.

Caitlyn Silbaugh, Parent Involvement/Volunteer Coordinator, reported that the children in classrooms are talking about saving energy and part of saving energy might be for parents to carpool to meetings or getting their children to school. Caitlyn also reminded us that RIOT is starting. Reading Instead of Television is a program that Head Start parents have been very active in. There will be a kick-off meeting on January 29, 2009 at 5:30 pm. at the RMDC dinner club. Head Start will be providing a pancake dinner, cooked by Head Start fathers. This year's goal is 35,000 minutes for the RIOT program and if we meet that goal Mountain West Bank will award us \$500 for books! Patty said that Caitlin has done up a new form for recording minutes read that should be much more user-friendly.

Ashlee Salisbury announced her resignation with Policy Council as her family is moving to Wyoming. She is going to be looking for a replacement either for PC or Class Rep depending on if her Class Rep can step into PC.

Patty has a sheet listing all the committees PC and Reps signed up for. The Training Committee is the only one with an opening.

The Class Reps then went with Caitlin for their meeting and the Policy Council began their meeting at 6:10 p.m. **Facilitator:** Crystie Burnette, **Timekeeper:** Christina Gwinn, **Scribe:** Jay Bowen. Crystie began by doing roll call in Andrea's absence.

Policy Council Members Present: Crystie Burnette, Amy Thiel, Ashlee Salisbury, Christina Gwinn, Monica Corrigan, Sara Miller, Sara Cook, Autumn Jones, Sandy Hugus, Twila Harrington, Magalie Belanger, and Gina Marker. Andrea Edgar joined the meeting later.

Policy Council Members Excused: Tom Dwyer, Sara Shurtliff.

Policy Council Members Unexcused: Kim Michiels

Guests: Jerry Loendorf (RMDC Board), Pam Novak, and Patty Dahl. Lynn Guay and Janet Coughlin came later in the meeting.

A quorum was established.

Review of Ground Rules: Magalie Belanger reviewed all the ground rules. It was noted that the ground rules were re-copied and looking very nice.

Agenda Review: Sara Miller and Ashlee Salisbury need to leave early. Patty Dahl asked on behalf of Janet Coughlin if Janet could be given some time to talk about Parent Education when she comes to talk about the Family and Community Partnerships grant goals; this was okay with everyone. Sara Cook told PC that the Townsend Head Start is preparing to start their playground improvements.

Approval of December 11, 2008 minutes: Ashlee wanted to make a correction the minutes. In the Directors report, sixth paragraph to change “do” to “to”. Twila also made the change in the year in the Director’s report to 2009. Amy also noted that Jennifer Casey, from Townsend was left off the attendance call and she was here. Twila moved to approve the minutes. All approved.

Treasurer’s Report: Ashlee handed out the Financial Report for December. The current total is \$25,704.36 for all accounts. Total deposited in all accounts for the month of December was \$13,170.40. Total spent in all accounts for the month of December was \$14,237.94. Parent fund spending for December was \$5,570.32 for candles and for incentives for the fundraiser, Biggest Loser reimbursement, the spring picnic space, and a portion of the parent fund checks. Parent fund deposits for December were \$11,787.75 from candle sales, December interest and a donation. Parent fund currently has \$12,007.41 in it. Parent fund outstanding commitments are \$2000.00 for social/emotional program needs, and \$385.78 for Good Talking Words books so we actually have \$9,621.63 to spend. The Parent Fund CD was \$2,349.60 as of 11/6/08, renewed for seven months at 2.48%.

Head Start Budget Training: Pam Novak, RMDC Fiscal Analyst that works with Patty on the Head Start budget, came and explained how the accounting reports come to be the report that PC receives. The report is constructed from a nine page main report. The information is entered in code. On the one page report, many things are broken down differently, according to when they apply. She explained that most of Head Start is broken down into departments and then object codes. She went on to explain some of the meaning of these codes. Most of the costs are non-personnel. This report is done monthly and condensed for PC. In-kind contributions are a big part of the Head Start budget as well. She then explained the indirect costs is a huge amount that has to do with mostly administrative costs such as Human Services and Fiscal Services and that all the programs pay 12% indirect cost rate. The indirect cost rate is negotiated and is a set rate and cannot be changed until 2010. All programs at RMDC are facing a deficit. Head Start has a budget committee meeting about their deficit. Costs keep going up and we have been flat funded for several years. It is not known whether Head Start or the agency as a whole will receive a Cost of Living Increase this coming year. Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) is what has saved HS’s short fall the past two years. Last year we were \$47,000 over budget. This year, we are projecting a \$58,000 shortfall but hoping for under \$40,000. In the budget committee there have been a lot of suggestions on how the program can save money. Head Start cannot count on CSBG to cover our costs. There are a lot of other programs that rely on CSBG to help with their costs. Pam and Patty are watching the personal services section of the budget now; if hours and numbers are off, it can reflect in the budget. Anticipated costs are things like rent raising for the program. Twila Harrington encouraged PC members to contact our state and federal representatives and ask for help with funding.

Grant Goals and Objectives: Patty started this part of the meeting out by explaining how the focus area goals and objectives being discussed tonight are taken out of the grant that was written last year. This is year 2 of our grant cycle. In year 1 new long term goals and shorter term objectives are set for

a three year period. In this year's grant each focus area advisory team will talk about the progress that has been made on each of the grant goals or objectives set last year or any new ones set this year. So what will be presented and discussed tonight is the goals and objectives from last year with information added from this year.

Early Childhood Development and Health Services (ECDHS) Grant Goals and Objectives: Lynn Guay, ECDHS manager, handed out the Early Childhood Development and Health Services Three-Year Goals. She then went into detail about the goals. They are as follows:

Goal One: Provide more comprehensive mental health services for Head Start Children. The best program for these services was AWARE. PC approved and these services have started within the classrooms. The assessment dates are set for the children that have been chosen to move on. It is the parent's choice to continue treatment. There is constant interaction between the administration of Head Start and AWARE.

Goal Two: In conjunction with Family and Community Partnerships, provide more comprehensive mental health services for Head Start families. One thing that was found out is that there is continued support throughout the community for children, but not for adults. Adults experience trauma, and services seem to taper off. Head Start would like to continue with adults as well.

Goal Three: Practice full implementation of Creative Curriculum in all of our classrooms. There are many different interest areas within each Head Start classroom. Such areas are the block area, and the creative play area. These interest areas are in conjunction with the Creative Curriculum that is currently implemented within the classrooms. While looking into these areas, ECDHS found that there are many areas that need updated. In this school year 2008/2009, they purchased furniture and some equipment for 3 interest areas. They would like to update the cooking and library areas in 2009/2010. School year 2010/2011 updates include computer access for all the classroom staff. They are projecting and hoping to provide laptops for the teachers. School year 2011/2012, they are hoping to have all changes implemented in all interest areas. The cost annually for replacement and improvement is \$10,000.

Pam talked about possible rotation of computers and/or leasing computers instead of the taking on the cost of buying them outright.

Goal Four: Increase Nutrition Coordinator's time at Head Start.

Goal Five: Explore additional support for Head Start children with special needs in outlying Head Start sites.

Goal Six: Develop a five year strategic plan that includes a capital improvement plan outlining continuous classroom improvements (new goal to be submitted in January 2009 and Lynn handed out this plan).

Motion was made by Magalie to approve the ECDHS goals and progress as outlined. All approved.

Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) Grant Goals and Objectives: Janet Coughlin, FCP manager, started out by talking about Parent Education Classes. The thinking was that parents could pick and chose the topics and types of classes that they wanted to attend. The attendance was extremely poor. Most of these classes have since been canceled. Two classes have been rescheduled. First is Family Enrichment which is set for April 20, and 27. Second, the Money Smart class has been moved to March 23, 2009. Flyers will go out to parents next week, hoping for more participation in the classes that have been rescheduled. If no interest is shown, there is a possibility that these classes will not continue either.

Janet then handed out Family and Community Partnerships Three-Year Goals. The Family and Community Partnerships Advisory team's mission is to develop goals that provide Head Start parent education that focuses specifically on economic stability and health care. She then went into detail about the goals. They are as follows:

Goal One: Increase knowledge and awareness regarding abuse issues. Several books have been given to the family advocates from the Friendship Center titled Why Does He Do That? to give to our

families in need of this information. For substance abuse, the family advocates have developed resources to put together a packet for parents who want to quit smoking with information of how to get help and interesting facts about the advantages of quitting.

Goal Two: Support families who have an incarcerated parent. The support group for this goal is no longer in service. There is a newsletter called Montana Alliance for Families Touched by Incarceration. The FCP team does not believe that this goal needs to go any further, and will use the information already obtained to help the children affected within the program.

Goal Three: Increase the awareness of the importance of the presence of a positive, stable, male role model in a child's life. The team is looking at more of an activity based group. The idea was to start with basketball, and all of the gyms were booked. They have moved on to bowling. There also was suggestion of giving up the dad's group. The team has decided to continue with the programs that work. Certain topics of discussion were men treating women in a respectful manner, how to fight fair, and transition to co-parenting.

Magalie made a motion to accept the FCP goals and progress as presented. All approved.

Program Design and Management (PDM) Grant Goals and Objectives: Patty Dahl thanked Crystie and Twila for being a part of the PDM Advisory Team that works on the grant goals and objectives. She handed out the Program Design and Management Three-Year Goals. She then went into detail about the goals. They are as follows:

Goal One: Bring Head Start services to un-served communities in our service area. Such areas are Boulder and Lincoln. The team has decided to table this goal for the time being. There has been no expansion money so the program cannot possibly expand.

Goal Two: Secure a permanent Head Start classroom site (as part of a community center) on the Rossiter Elementary School campus in the north Helena valley. Head Start, School District #1, Lewis & Clark Library and Lewis & Clark County Health Department continue to work on the vision of a community center on the Rossiter School Campus in the north Helena Valley. A preliminary plan has been drawn.

Goal Three: Bring Early Head Start to Helena/East Helena community. This goal was put on hold due to the economic status of Head Start.

Goal Four: Reduce tobacco use in Head Start families and staff. A multifaceted team (including community members) to work on this goal will be developed by March 2009. This goal is reflected in Family and Community Partnerships and in the Program's Training Plan.

Goal Five: Reduce obesity in Head Start children and families and Head Start staff. The Program is meeting Objective A fully and will continue all of the efforts described. Further work on a comprehensive plan will likely begin the fall of 2009.

Goal Six: Increase salaries of all Head Start staff by \$2.00 an hour over the next three years. The Board of Directors of RMDC approved a 3% cost of living for all employees in May 2008 and the goal will continue.

Goal Seven: Bring Head Start program components to a level that supports full and consistent implementation of a Creative Curriculum. Early Childhood Staff has developed a five year plan for full implementation of Creative Curriculum and are in year two of the plan.

A motion was made by Christina to approve the PDM goals, progress, and plans. All approved.

2009-10 Training Plan: Sherrie Smith, Staff Development Coordinator, handed out a summary of Head Start's training plan. This plan is submitted with, but separate from, the regular grant. She then went into detail about the goals. They are as follows:

Goal One: Parents will be provided education regarding Head Start and their role as their child's first and primary educator.

Goal Two: Staff will be appropriately credentialed, meet program standards and licensure requirements and have opportunities for improving personal health.

Goal Three: Training will be provided to staff based on identified areas of program focus which include healthy lifestyles, mental health, and child and family literacy.

Goal Four: Staff will show improved ability to partner with, support, and engage parents in their role as their child's first and primary educator.

Goal Five: Staff ability to utilize early childhood best practices will increase in the areas of social/emotional development, literacy and pre-academic skills, identifying special needs of children, improving classroom practices and engaging parents.

A motion was made by Christina to approve the 2009-10 Training Plan goals and objectives. All approved. Magalie said she would sit on the Training Committee.

RMDC Board Report: Twila Harrington reported that the Board met on December 18, 2008. Bill Tromly presented the Fiscal. Annual Audit Report had no findings and the Board moved to approve and accept draft of the annual audit. All approved. MT Youth Homes report asked the Board to acquire MYH retirement plan to be in compliance with IRS guidelines. The Board also voted to accept new federal mileage rate to 55 cents a mile. Patty Dahl gave the Head Start update. Board approved using the Self-Assessment Toolkit for 2008-09 Self-Assessment. Elaine Bruce gave the Mental Health update. She reported the Crisis Services hiring is going well for clinic staff. Youth Connections Prevention with kids is teaming up with Boyd Andrews to work in schools. They received two grants to work in Helena & East Helena, Augusta & Lincoln for training and prevention. Compeer had eleven matches. The Drop-In Center has ADA issues that are being addressed. They have had five bids for renovations and have accepted the bid of Triple E Builders. The renovations have started. Jeff Miller gave the Housing update. Eagle Manor 3 had its Grand Opening and has been completely filled. The first floor of Eagle Manor 2 has begun renovations. MYH house will be a girl's facility instead of a boy's facility. This is the six bedroom, eight unit house that is being built as the High School House project this year. The hope is to deliver it "debt-free" as many of the furnishings for the rooms were donated. They are still exploring the Caird property located at Malfunction Junction. They are talking about making this project as green as possible with things like underground parking. The first phase will be a 20 unit structure with four-one bedroom, six-three bedroom, ten-two bedroom units.

Meeting Evaluation: Pluses: Pizza, lots of info and speakers, visitors, quorum, chocolate, dessert from Twila. **Wishes:** (To be) done on time

Next Meeting: January 22, 2009 at 5:15, meeting will start at 5:45 p.m. Dinner will be provided.

Crystie Burnette, Chairperson

Amy Thiel, Secretary