

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council



DRAFT KCFCCC Committee Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2004, 12:00pm – 1:30pm

Kent / MSU Extension Offices

775 Ball Avenue NE

Members/Alternates present: Susan Broman and Christine Nelson; Nanaruth Carpenter; Candace Cowling; Lynne Ferrel; Laura Clifton (for William Forsyth); Laurie Gardner; Debra Holmes-Garrison; Barb Terry; Paul Ippel; Nadine Klein; Marvin McKenzie; Sharon Loughridge (for Patti Nussbaum); Carol Paine-McGovern; Sandra L. Walls (for Cathy Raevsky); Diana Sieger and Wendy Jackson; Mike Weiler and Erin McGovern; Mary Alice Williams.

Members absent (with no alternate present): Tom Czerwinski; Beverly Drake.

Others present: Cathy W. Farnsworth (staff); Gary Ellen; Jim Madole; Richard Liberatore; Lynn Heemstra; Wayman Britt.

I. Welcome and Call to Order 12:10 pm

Diana Sieger called the meeting to order and welcomed the participants. Nan Carpenter moved acceptance of the June 8, 2004 KCFCCC minutes as presented. Mary Alice Williams seconded. The group unanimously accepted the minutes. There were no changes to the agenda.

Ms. Sieger welcomed the newest member to the committee, Ms. Laurie Gardner. Ms. Gardner joins the group as a consumer advocate. Ms. Sieger had Wayman Britt introduce the new Management Analyst, Cathy W. Farnsworth who replaces Ms. Archbold. Ms. Sieger recognized Ms. Archbold's years with the Council and the County during which she successfully worked to strengthen the KCFCCC's operations and focus.

II. KCFCCC Advocacy Guidelines

Ms. Sieger addressed the issue of incorporating Advocacy Guidelines for the KCFCCC in an effort to meet the expanding roles of the committees and their endeavors. Advocacy is a necessary tool in sharing the programs, successes and demands for services & funding needs. The KCFCCC also recognizes that the Council works on behalf of the Kent County Board of Commissioners and our voice should be reflective of the community needs. Sandra Walls suggested that the Guidelines include language regarding advocacy for elders as one of the Council's

goals in achieving effectiveness. In addition, Christine Nelson pointed out the need to offer advocacy for our State Government officials and wanted the Advocacy Guidelines to reflect this. These additions were noted. A motion was moved by Nadine Klein to approve the Advocacy Guidelines, including the additions. The motion was seconded by Mike Weiler. **The group unanimously approved the adoption of the Advocacy Guidelines.**

III. Early Childhood System Plan Document

Ms. Susan Broman made the presentation regarding the approval of the Kent County Early Childhood System: A Community Plan. Ms. Broman thanked the KCFCCC for the wherewithal in reconfiguring itself in the manner it has over the last 3 years in an effort to better serve the community. Ms. Broman also thanked the ECC members and staff for their diligence in keeping the process moving. Susan welcomed the ECC members present and offered them (and those members unable to attend the meeting) a round of applause for their work and accomplishments. Ms. Broman thanked United Way staff for its role and work on the plan. Ms. Broman states the plan, as presented, is a Road Map for Early Childhood Services, it is not a “Map Quest,” noting the different perspectives. When the plan was in its development stages, the committee members maintained a broad and collaborative perspective throughout the process. Susan touched upon the need for on-going data collection and a need for governance. The governance structure suggested in the plan is modeled after one developed in Kansas City. Ms. Broman’s discussion addressed the State of Michigan’s interest in our plan, that Kent County is a leader in this area ahead of the State by say a year & half. She hopes pilot programs may come from the implementation of the plan. She credits Kent County’s sustainability of its programs and services for children whereby growth of those services has been deliberate. Susan outlined 6 Vision areas of the plan listed here:

- Parents are primary
- Informal and formal support systems exist.
- Quality
- Universal access.
- Relationship building
- Information.

Discussion items from the group included the following questions/answers:

- *How does the plan get adopted by community agencies?* First, the plan is adopted by the collaborative body of the KCFCCC.
- *How does the plan get distributed? Is it embargoed?* The plan may be distributed after the KCFCCC’s approval today.
- *What role does the United Way play in the future of the Early Childhood Community Plan?* The plan and committee moves ahead in the spirit of collaboration with a neutral entity acting as the fiduciary. The plan is not owned

by one agency or organization, but owned by all. United Way has acted in this manner in the past and will continue to in the future.

- It was suggested that the plan be formally distributed or presented to the State of Michigan's FIA Director, Marianne Udow and also formally presented to the Kent County Board of Commissioners.

A motion was put forth by Mike Weiler to approve the Kent County's Early Childhood System Community Plan. The motion was seconded by Nadine Klein. The Plan was approved unanimously at 12:55 pm September 14, 2004.

IV. ELOA II Proposal

Barb Terry presented on the pending grant to the federal government for appx. \$943,000 written for the KCFCCC. Goals of the grant include: a) enhance early childhood literacy; b) develop integration/accreditation for child care centers w/mental health services; c) develop a cultural competency framework for early childhood systems; d) implement early childhood governance & evaluation systems. Barb suggests our chances for getting this grant have gone from little to better with a recent inquiry coming from Washington about the proposal. Barb states we should know by the end of September whether or not the grant is awarded.

V. KCFCCC Letterhead Usage

David shared the decision of the Executive Committee whereby KCFCCC letterhead should be used for official acts of the Council and its committees and communication regarding activities of the Council and its committees.

VI. Committee Updates

- Early Childhood Committee – no other updates.

- Elementary School Years.

Presented by Wendy Jackson. Wendy shared that the committee has resolved the summer food programming and is taking the committee into the issue of school based service integration expanding upon the FIA model. A data mapping system is a tool being looked at to help the committee determine where demands and current services are presently located. This "tool" could incorporate many areas of human services data to provide committee members with a sound outlook of what is being done and what is yet to be offered in the way of social supports for children & families. It was suggested by one of the members to not overlook data from the Rental Property Owners Association. Wendy suggested that the first next step for this committee is data collection followed by data analysis and input from direct service providers. The next meeting of the Elementary School Years Committee is Tuesday, September 21, 2004 at the GRCF.

- Middle/High School Years. Jim Madole presented.

This committee is working on governance issues also for the mentoring collaborative. The next steps include monitoring the mentoring collaborative members' progress and looking at service gaps utilizing the help of GVSU school

of social work. Jim notes the committee is meeting monthly with 10 or so organizations regularly represented. A mentoring picnic was hosted August 4, 2004 with some 100+ in attendance. The vacant VISTA position is being filled come November 04. In addition mentor discount cards are being sponsored by 10 or so businesses (such businesses offering family fun outing events like horseback riding, swimming, etc.). Both Allegan County and Ottawa County want to develop the same sort of discount card for their volunteer mentors working with children and will coordinate their card distribution with Kent County.

- On Going Family Support presented by Sandra Davis.
Sandra discussed the need for on-going cross-training for social workers regarding substance abuse. The next training dates are Oct 22 and Nov 5. Detailed information will be shared with the community by the committee. Sandra shared the importance of communication with area universities regarding reinstating substance abuse curriculum as a core requirement for graduation, not an elective. The Committee's next steps are to look at older adolescent issues in 2005.

VII. Other Updates

- Mary Alice Williams of Arbor Circle shared their MSS/ISS grant award information.
- Wendy Jackson of GRCF announced a meeting date for the GR Education Reform Initiative from 9- noon September 22, 2004 at the WMU Grand Rapids Campus.
- Sandra Walls of Kent County DPH announced their award of a Federal Healthy Start Grant focusing on African-American Families.

VIII. Adjourn.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm. **The next KCFCCC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 2, 2004, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., Kent County MSU Extension Service, 775 Ball Ave. NE.**