

## Hillsdale County

### Great Start Collaborative Meeting Minutes

November 27, 2017: 9:00am to 11:00 am

Location: HCISD Parke D. Hayes Building, 310 W. Bacon Rd. Hillsdale



#### Attendees:

Stefanie Rathburn - Great Start	Maria Cowan - Countryside Montessori
Darcy Affholter - GSRP Reading	Angela Salameh - Parent
Clint Brugger - CAA	Christine Cjestland - Highfields
Jamie Harness - Center for Family Health	Kelly Castle - Parent
Tammy Griffiths - Michigan Works South East	Ruth Vanderpool-Combs - Highfields
Bree Harmon - McKinney Vento	Gina Fosdick - Great Start
Mary Proctor - BHSJ Health Agency	Micha Moore - Hillsdale Community Schools
Rozanne Pauze - Grandparent	Tonya McCallister - Parent
Betty Elliott - Child Care Provider	Mari Nunez - Family Counseling Center
Dan Moore - Parent Advisory Council; HCISD	Mindy Wilson - HCISD
Kristen Mesarosh - North Adams - Jerome GSRP	Linda Wise - HCISD/GSRP
Hannah Jordan - Family Counseling Center/District	Cheryl Schaerer - Parent
Court Lona Carpenter - Parent	Laurie Brandes - Substance Abuse Prevention Council
	Stacy Ansel - HCISD

1. **Welcome & Introductions:** Mari called meeting to order and started brief introductions.

#### 2. Updates:

- Operating Guidelines:** Thank you to everyone who filled out and turned in. Please be sure to sign and return your guidelines today at the end of the meeting.
- Trusted Advisor Update:** We are wrapping up first round of funding. Was supposed to be done by end of December, but extended to end of March 2018. Playgroups in outlying communities will be extended and continued. 25/100 literacy backpacks have been distributed. Just submitted application for 2018 Trusted Advisors Grant. Broke into two funding proposals. Continue efforts of playgroups and hire someone to facilitate and promote playgroups. In addition, we will also put in free little libraries within those small communities. Second track is to begin or expand the weekend backpack nutrition program that some districts are doing. Some districts have agreed to work on this. Should know if receive funds by end of December.
- Parent Liaison Report:** No Parent Meeting in December. But will have Winterfest on December 11th at Greenfield School. Looking for childcare providers for parent meetings during the day and evenings. If you know anyone who may have interest, please see Stefanie or Gina with lead information...approximately 4 to 5 hours per month. Clint suggested that Hillsdale College does community service. May be something to look into. We have done this in the past, but really need some consistency. Stefanie shared that Andrea Bricker was going to check into this as well.

**3. Engaging Families small group activity:** Stefanie described ongoing challenge of engaging families for participation, whether it be the PLAY opportunities being offered in the 4 outlying districts or attendance at monthly Parent Meetings. We want to spend some time brainstorming two things:

1. What are some of the possible reasons for lack of engagement?
2. What are possible solutions for increasing engagement?

Write down as many thoughts as each individual can capture, then share in group discussion at table. The following ideas were shared from each table:

- May not resonate with parents. How is this important to me. Have parent testimony.
- Have a gift card or incentive if you bring a friend
- Send letters to parents in community who have kids in age group or to the kids themselves.
- Get area classroom teachers involved to help with comfort level of parents.
- Carpooling
- Fear of childrens' behaviors and uncomfortable topics... change marketing and focus on fun, unstructured, no pressure of parent responsibilities. "We love little kids... we want to have fun!"
- Increase social media presence. ONLY 145 likes on Facebook Great Start page. Everyone share & like the page and share & like events.
- Do a giveaway. If you share and like this page, we will give away a \_\_\_\_\_ after 500 likes.
- Group(75 people) that I send information to and they send it on.
- Hang flyers with pull tabs at the bottom.

Stefanie will summarize all brainstormed ideas into a document to share with group when minutes are distributed.

**4. Sub-committee work:** Approximately 45 minutes of committee work. List of focus ideas for today have been provided to each committee chair. Will pause at 10:20 to report out on committee work done today.

**Positives:**

- Schools are doing literacy
- Found good resources for promoting high quality childcare
- Community Resources: making connections with 211 and CAPA yellow pages. Inviting 211 as guest to January meeting to present and hopefully stay to be involved in community resources committee.

**Frustrations:**

- Need more community members involved to make difference
- Doing great things in early childhood, but stops or fizzles out at school age
- Take back to our agencies to try to get more involvement
- Spinning wheels so to speak

- Everyone can only do so much... how to get others outside of GSC to feel the need to get involved.

**Ideas:**

- Reach out to do meetings in December with people who are missing.
- Gina and Stefanie can help facilitate.
- Tonya shared analogy of "ripples in the water". It's the little ripples that lead to the bigger actions. It takes time for those ripples to reach outwards. and have a significant impact.

**5. Agency Updates**

- Featured presentation - Family Counseling Center(Mari Nunez)
  - Private agency who does counseling with children, adults, families, couples, individuals etc.
  - Takes MOST insurances in Hillsdale County. Will work on sliding fee scale if not covered. Don't turn people away
  - Parent Talk group. Doing fall group now. Another group starts in January. (See flyer). 6 week program. meet with parents for 45 minutes. Hannah Jordan (social skills facilitator) meets with kids (3-10). Childcare provided. Have meal then break up into groups. At end, the parents come out and do a calming activities they've learned. Open to anyone. Will do 5 groups this year. 1st happening now. Doing them in evenings now, but can do daytime group if needed. Reach out to Mari to work this out. Midstate Health Network funded.
  - Can provide prenatal classes, using Nurturing Families program, but hasn't had anyone come. Trying to word out to get people in. Targeted for prenatal and postnatal.
  - Trauma assessment services for DHHS. Can have done if you have an open case with DHHS. Look at impact of the trauma. Comprehensive. Talk to everyone involved with children and try to develop plan for improvement with child. Referral must come through DHHS. A few vouchers for school districtsto refer.
  - Located on Carleton Rd. Can get families in within a week or so. Try to be very accommodating. Weekend and evening offerings are available.
- CAA looking for people to adopt families for Christmas. Can also refer family to be adopted.
- Hillsdale Assembly of God partnering with Salvation Army for Toys for Tots. Sign up through Salvation Army to participate.

**Next meeting is scheduled for January 22nd 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**