

## Otter Tail Family Services Collaborative

[www.otfsc.org](http://www.otfsc.org)

Working together...

Serving families

...Improving lives

### Early Childhood Work Group/IEIC Meeting

2:30- 4 PM November 5, 2009

Dead Lake Room- Government Service Center, Fergus Falls

**Attendance:** Beth Achter (LCSC – 3); Marion Kershner & Kimberly Schossow (student nurse) (OTC Public Health); LuAnn Harris (Child Care Resource & Referral- 4); Stacy Haugen-McAllister (Fergus Falls Area Special Education Cooperative- 5); Jan Herseth (OTWCAC-115); Donna Atherton (The ARC); Brad Vold (OTC Human Services); Karen Hanan (FF ECFE – 2); Sue Ewy (MCSHN-5); and Jane Patrick (Collaborative Coordinator).

1. Stacy McAllister welcomed the group and extended a welcome to our guest nursing student from Public Health.
2. Stacy called for a review of the minutes of the October 1 meeting. The group discussed the fact these minutes would suffice for both IEIC and ECWG and were more than meeting the needs of the IEIC requirements since they are only required to meet four times per year. **MOTION:** To approve the bills for October in the amount of \$2,924.18 and November in the amount of \$26,462.82. (B.Vold/S. McAllister/carried)
3. Jane shared a copy of the current financial statement. She highlighted the current amount spend on ECFE visits to date and explained that she has a preliminary concern about the amount allocated since we have already used more than 50% of the allocation. This includes the cost for staff employed by Lakes Country Service Cooperative for which a bill has been received for 50% of the annual contract amounts for the vast majority of the ECFE home visitors. However, Jane also noted that there has been a spike in referrals for first time families in the Perham and Mills districts and therefore she has concerns that the contract amounts for those districts may not be adequate to get through the entire fiscal year. Jane is checking with LCSC to see if a disproportionate share of time for those contracts has been spent on PSOP services. If that were the case, then there may not be an issue since all of the PSOP time is covered regardless of whether or not the budget amounts are accurate. Jane will keep the group informed about this issue as the year continues. If there is going to be a suspected budget shortfall, the group will need to make a decision on how to address the challenge by the time of the February meeting.
4. Rothsay visits – the group discussed the potential for a conflict with pay rates for the new Rothsay ECFE home visitor between training time and home visit time from other ECFE staff. Jane explained that all of the ECFE home visitors are receiving a higher rate of pay for Caring Connections visits than their other normal contract time. However, because the work group is on such a tight budget, there are not dollars available to pay for additional home visitor training time for the new Rothsay Home Visitor. However, there are dollars available to pay the higher rate for visits that will potentially take place since it was budgeted for those visits to be reimbursed at the higher Public Health pay scale. Stacy and Jane met with the Rothsay Superintendent and the agreement was that Rothsay will pay for all the training time, and the program would only reimburse the school for the actual visit time. The group decided that since we were upfront and let them know that we do not have dollars available for training time, and that they agreed to cover the cost of training time, it will be the school's decision what rate of pay the home visitor will receive for training time. Jane will contact Mary Stetz and let her know of the pay differential and offer to pay the new home visitor at the starting rate for visit time if that is the school's desire.

5. The group discussed Work Plan Task 3. Stacy explained that the Fergus Falls site has one preschool class with only eight kids, but has afternoon classes which are very full and kids on a waiting list to be served. Superintendent Ness is very motivated to work with the collaboration efforts between Head Start and/or EFCE. The financial support is being discussed and the group continues to work on making this collaboration successful. The next step will be for the early childhood folks to develop a list of children waiting to be served, and potential School Readiness teachers who would be available to add more time to their contract, and the school has committed to making it work. Stacy explained she also has a meeting set up with Chuck Cheney in Battle Lake to expand their program as they currently have 34 four year olds in one classroom three days per week. Underwood has a five day preschool program so there is competition among the districts to have more full time programming. Some of the expense for programming is paid by through registration fees and/or sliding fee scales. The group discussed what may be happening in the east side school and agreed that Jane should send an inquiry out to ECFE and Head Start coordinators for the East Side schools to determine the following: a) do they have waiting lists for preschool or early childhood programs b) do they have very large class sizes; c) Are Head Start children going to early childhood programs? The group requested that Jan collect this information and then develop some sort of an outline to show the different models in each district. Kenny's Candy in Perham will be hiring 150 new people in January so they are expecting an influx of young families that may need care and programming.
6. Marion raised a discussion about data collection and reporting Caring Connections visits. There currently is a duplication of entries for NFP documentation and Caring Connections documentation. The current process provides that NFP nurses and ECFE teachers currently collect the same data on the same forms at all four visits. However Public Health also collects and enters their own data which is specific to NFP visits. Jane enters the data into an Access database for all visits completed by ECFE, Head Start and ECSE. The group discussed collecting data in a set time line such as per year or in a program time line. The group also questioned what are we currently doing with the data collected. The group discussed the fact that consistent long term data collect can be very helpful for future program change and or grant writing. The group felt it was very important to continue collecting the key pieces of information that can show outcomes. The group requested that this item be put back on the agenda for the next meeting and asked that Jane bring copies of visit forms to determine what questions we should collect consistently and what we should measure. NFP is a different program and therefore we may not be comparing apples to apples because Caring Connections is only four visits and NFP is much more intense. Marion will bring NFP reports and Jane will bring Caring Connections reports to show what we know. The group will make a decision on what outcomes they truly want to accomplish.
7. The group held a follow-up discussion regarding the potential to determine if parents on the Head Start Policy Council could provide feedback on Caring Connections visits. However, Jan explained that every year they have a change in representatives for this council. She also explained that in December they will have a policy council meeting with old and new representatives, and at least 51% of the council has to be parents. Jan will check to see if any of the parents had Caring Connections visits. The group decided that we need to complete a standardized form and ask parents to fill it out following the last visit. Jane explained that Caring Connections previously collected consumer satisfaction surveys but discontinued using them last year because of the changes in programming and the fact that NFP visits were very different from basic Caring Connections visits. The group felt it might be useful for ECFE home visitors to continue handout out survey at the 12 month visit. Jane will bring a copy of the survey for review to the next meeting.
8. IEIC Business
  - Budget – The “Family Services” line item is how they pay the parent support specialist position through the Arc. Public Health needs to send a bill to FFASEC for the two amounts that are allocated to them. Public Health should items dollars which will be designated for 0-2 Follow Along (higher amount) and 3-5 Follow Along.
  - FFASEC utilizes the dollars within the budget for support staff to assist with programming

- Service Coordination dollars are used to fund positions for special ed staff that provide service coordination.
  - Training/personal development – used to help support the Denise Meyer sign language and other trainings for staff which are useful.
  - IRT –next meeting on November 30 at McKinley at 3:00
  - West Central Initiative will be writing a grant to pursue a regional IEIC training model – basically this means that the local models will remain the same, but they will access the \$5,000 to pursue regional training opportunities.
  - The Wilkin County IEIC model is looking at more specific events coordinated by the parent support consultant to tap into pre-existing events as a way of increasing family involvement.
  - The Arc is also looking at ways to draw additional participants for the training events which they plan and organize.
9. Kitchen Table discussion - Jane explained that the Otter Tail County Early Childhood Initiative Coordinators are planning to give a presentation to the CEO Group at their December meeting called the “Kitchen Table Initiative.” The purpose of this presentation is to raise awareness for the importance of quality early childhood programming, and to increase early childhood initiatives. Jane will scan the presentation worksheet and sent it to the work group for additional feedback. Jane will also look it over to see if the presentation can be cut down to 30 minutes, which is the available time frame at the CEO Group meeting. Jane requested that the Early Childhood Work Group offer their formal support to the ECI communities in preparing and hosting this discussion.
10. Postpartum packets – Marion noted that Public Health will be making a switch with postpartum SIDS information. Marion also indicated that one of the nurses had requested that she thank the group for their support, information and incentive gifts provided by the Caring Connections program. \
11. LuAnn reported that child care provider visits are starting out slow. There have been only three providers starting in the County since July 1. LuAnn also shared an update about the oral health visit that she is providing for 12 providers who were enrolled in Caring Connections last year. This visit is being sponsored by the four Otter Tail County Early Childhood Initiatives and involves providers and parents. LuAnn and Jane also share updates about the child care mental health consultation training which they had attended earlier in the day.
12. Brad provides an update on the Parent Support Outreach Program (PSOP). All is going well with 18 families currently enrolled in the program. One concern with a home visitor that has been addressed and will be monitored.
13. The meeting was adjourned by consensus. The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, December 3 from 9:00 – 10:30 AM in the Dead Lake Room** at the Government Service Center in Fergus Falls.