

**Mason County Early Learning Coalition
Monthly Meeting**

MINUTES

Nov 7, 2013 9:30 – 11:30

Present:

Lydia Buchheit MCELC Chair, Mason County Public Health

Holly Porter, MCELC Future Chair, Headstart/ECEAP

Kristen Frankum, Mason County Public Health

Fran Williams, Childcare Action Council

Jenny Blumenstein, Sound Learning

Gail Straus, Shelton School District

Kristi Selby, MCELC Secretary, Shelton Timberland Library

Meetings, Membership, and Involvement:

- Gail suggested meeting every other month to accommodate Coalition members as well as to dovetail or coordinate with other potentially related meetings. Lydia will be sending out a monkey survey to ask members about convenient times as well as interest in participating in other ways without necessarily having to meet. Holly suggested shortening meetings if/when possible.
- Jennifer: Identify the missions of the other groups that we might already share common goals with.
- Lydia: Clarified that we are more of an umbrella organization.
- Holly: The Interagency Coordinating Council is trying to have guest speakers, so we could get the word out to ELC folks.
- Gail: Appreciates the energy that was generated from the large group and wonders if more direct service providers could be involved.
- Lydia will try to figure out wording for survey and will try to get survey out soon to generate response. New clerical staff is exploring an e-newsletter that we could send out. Also exploring the Visions for Early Learning website- software they are using, etc. Thurston/Lewis Co. websites are very different. Explore the website as a volunteer or student project? Fran might know some students. Gail will pass on to CTE career and tech ed. Students as a possibility for juniors to consider. New Market skills center could also identify a student.

Regional coalition update

- R.E. an e-mail Dan sent: DEL has withdrawn a proposal to add ten local representational voices, but claim to recognize the importance of regional advisors. Group discussed that Coalitions are legally mandated to have a board but not necessarily a critical voice. Gail related this to an assessment system contracted for ECEAP but other school district employees not being able to use the assessment system. Disappointed with the separation of representation and not having a voice. What did they gain? Was it cost prohibitory? Holly mentioned that Dan reiterated that

the reps will be listened to. Lydia feels like Mason Co. needs to step up and ask questions of DEL to ask critical questions as well as follow-up. Fran mentioned running into glitches with OSPI/Early Achievers assessment, in that it's a very specific assessment system. Holly suggested that this "speaks to needing to speak up." We understand being lean, but also need to express any representational concerns as we move forward.

Work groups:

Lydia mentioned the \$10,000 grant funds and that deliverables need to be met.

Community event potential:

- Fran mentioned a possible event: Caspar Babypants – 6:30-8:30 – birth -8 "Family Fun Event" Venue could be the Middle school since it has the best stage and flooring. Gail will send school venue info to Fran. Crafts and photography as well?
- Holly – another idea: David Matteson do a family event. DM is willing to do it for a nominal fee. Could have an interpreter. Jan 25?, Feb, May? Evening event? Kindergarten readiness event in spring? Families do attend, would need some funds from the coalition, provide dinner? Matteson is a literacy trainer and has been here already locally. Local kindergarten teachers are beginning to implement his ideas. Idea – bus from Belfair? Could we pay or use Mason Co. transit?
- Gail wondered if North Mason school dist could be more involved if it could be pulled off? Holly mentioned their very tight budget.
- Caspar would cost approx \$500 dollars. \$200 for OMS? Sound system needed? Gail mentioned non-profit discount for space. Goodie bags of apples, goldfish, juice would cost approx? \$1,500 dollars for whole event?
- Lydia wondered if we could get a budget for a possible May event? Also requested people who could volunteer? Caspar – performs for 45 min. 6:45 event would be 6-8.
- Lydia mentioned donations/discounts of food from Subway, Safeway.

Provider conference

- Fran: need classes to get scores for Early Achievers, very complicated. Would be interested in doing another conference but not limited to Early Achievers. Annie is looking for support, but unclear if it is financial or space needs. Annie will get us more info on the needs. Providers working so hard to improve environment
- Lydia interjected our budget has \$2500 available support to share for all community activities
- Fran mentioned STEM classes and connecting language with skills for early learners.
- Holly: March 4th and April 19th David Matteson is available.
- Fran: Annie could possibly work with Connie to make a conference happen.

- Lydia: Clarified work plan for the grant has the goal of having 2 events plus community outreach that can occur at every event as well as through workers and the website.

Play and Learn series

- Gail: Title 3 grant money paired a teacher with bi-lingual teacher for Play and Learn group last summer was very successful.
- Lydia: clarified that grant monies are time sensitive, and must be utilized by end of June.
- Fran: mentioned Kaleidoscope (floor play) in Olympia at Hospital. CAC has some money for Mason County. An entire year is much more productive than six weeks. Parents, grandparents, teen parents, have been involved in groups that focus on birth-5, including an interpreter, last approximately an hour and a half and have been held at apartment complexes, churches, Family Practice Services.
- Gail mentioned in Mason county transportation is an issue. Had great staff, Renee and Diana Castro do the groups in Spanish.
- Holly cited the need for other language skills such as Kanjobal.
- Jenny mentioned targeting families from Sound Learning, school district, Health dept casework families, Headstart, for a six month series.
- Fran mentioned- Love, Talk Play Grant; Kaleidoscope has free training in English and Spanish.
- Gail mentioned that their group recruited from different programs, and were predominantly bilingual. Hosted at Evergreen.
- Gail's budget cycle went through Aug. 31, and was mandated parent education.
- Library as venue for play group? Kristi mentioned King County Library System model partnership program with Kaleidoscope Play and Learn groups.
- Lydia mentioned incentives such as gift cards also work well with new parents.
- Lydia mentioned teen moms via Health Dept, trying to get them to attend?
- Gail asked about supporting a specific group i.e. Choice moms? Kaleidescope model could work well in this instance as one of the goals is to identify born group leaders and let them take over, thus offering new moms additional skill sets.
- Lydia - reiterated this 6 weeks play group should also include Spanish speaking families.
- Jenny wondered if we can bring the Kaleidescope trainer to Mason County? Fran confirmed yes.
- Could we train a Headstart teacher or Spanish speaking teens? This would offer them a unique skill set. Fran will double check budget for training.
- Gail mentioned that we could also pay for training out of title 3 funds, and trainees can go to Seattle for training. Mt. View Para-Pro mentioned.
- Fran will double check to make sure of training opportunities.

Work Group Action plan

- Fran will ask Annie C. about working on a Family Fun Event.
- Holly will work on David Matteson event in May, Gail will too, and will check with Linda Ferguson, Becky Allen from Shelton Valley, and a contact from Squaxin.

- Casper Baby pants – Fran volunteers. Lydia indicated Linda West had said she would like to be on the community event committee.
- Play and Learn – summer session (Dale?)
- Library Kaleidoscope Play and Learn - Kristi, Fran
- Jenny will work on tasks as they evolve, and networking with families, as well as working on logistics.
- Connie Daughterly to work on provider conference? (Fran will ask)
- Preschool target for conference/ David Matteson event. Will still need volunteers for that. Gail will work with Holly on this.
- Ellen Short Sanchez is not as available to lead projects, but can help with logistics.
- Count on Jennifer from SSRF to help out.
- Lydia will need a brief paragraph from everyone about their events to share with the membership.

For the good of the order

Opportunity to become an official BlockFest trainer? Kristi wondered if Mollie Taylor from WSU would be interested. Bilingual teacher trained would be great.

Next meeting – Dec. 5th

Meeting adjourned.