



**Meeting Minutes – Educational Preparedness Working Group**

Date: October 25, 2016

Time: 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Location: Prior Lake Library

**Work Group Members:**

Roz Addler		Renee Hartman		Michelle Rutoski	
Linda Anderson	X	Amy Hennen		Tamara Severtson	
Carla Arrunategui		Candace Kragthorpe		Emily Skahen	X
Lynne Burke		Kim Latterner	X	Kami Thompson	X
Kathy Busch	X	Barbara Marschall	X	Lisa Von Bokern	
Mary Erickson		Ibrahim Mohamed			
Marie Johnson	X	Todd Otis	X		

**Staff Members:**

Suzanne Arntson		Jake Grussing		Jennifer Schultz	X
Lisa Brodsky	X	Kari Ouimette	X	Tawnya Ward	X
Sarah Geffre	X	Lisa Pollard	X		

**General Housekeeping**

- Reminder that we are meeting on the third Tuesday evening in November (November 15<sup>th</sup>) at the Shakopee Library. There will be no December meeting. The January meeting is planned to again be on the fourth Tuesday (January 27<sup>th</sup>) at the Prior Lake Library.
- Reminder that the 50 by 30 website ([www.livelearnearn.org](http://www.livelearnearn.org)) is live. The website hosts agendas, minutes, and other information for each of the groups related to the 50 by 30 project (Housing, Workforce Readiness, Educational Preparedness, Transportation and Steering Committee). This is a great resource for seeing what the other groups are doing.

**Scott County Update**

Scott County has funding for a readmobile/literacy mobile. Money was promised from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) as long as the county could come up with matching donation funds within one year. The library was named in a trust fund that allowed Scott County to come up with the matching funds to receive the money from SMSC. Scott County Library Director, Jake Grussing, will be asking for input from the Educational Preparedness group in

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regards to where they see the vehicle best being used at, what the vehicle might offer for services, etc. The goal is for the vehicle to be a partnership across departments (perhaps library, public health, etc.). Details are still being worked out and more details will be forthcoming.

Scott County Library has decided to purchase Beanstack. It is an online resource designed to help parents find the right materials for their children. It allows kids to follow a learning track and earn badges as they read. It is customized to the child's interests and can be used to earn badges. Families can use the program from home. It is still a work in progress with many details to be decided. More information to come in January.

### **Steering Committee Update**

Kami attended the Steering Committee meeting held earlier in the day and thought the meeting was interesting. Individuals who have very specific agendas were told to go back to the process and stop focusing on solutions. Kami doesn't want to lose the energy and momentum the Educational Preparedness has going and feels that the message might be targeted more at other workgroups and not Educational Preparedness who has had a lot of good conversations. Educational Preparedness is unique in that the people in this group haven't worked together before. Kami likes the direction the group is going and feels like it is important we keep going in that direction.

At the April retreat, we talked about what are some of the issues and the root causes of the issues. The Educational Preparedness team has talked about root causes facing the individuals we are focused on such as health issues, mental health issues, transportation issues, access issues, etc. We've had good discussions about the issues and really narrowed the focus of the group down to something manageable to focus on. The process might not look exactly like what is in the 50 by 30 process binder, but Kami feels confident we are on the right track.

### **"Passion" Recap**

Kami felt like the two biggest issues she noticed people mention as part of the passion activity was **access** and **education**. The group agreed.

Kami asked the group to consider the broad goal of the Educational Preparedness group being **Children are ready for Kindergarten and reading at grade level by grade 3**.

With that broad goal in mind, the group could focus their energy on strategies to achieve the goal—central resources, literacy campaign, literacy mobile/readmobile, etc. If you have ideas you want the group to consider or add to the list, let the group know. Kami wants it to be a list of strategies that the group always keeps in the back of their mind as they work.

The group discussed how short term strategies and long term goals can go hand in hand together—they don't have to be thought of separately.

### **Parent Aware (Todd and Marie)**

Todd asked to speak about Parent Aware in the hope it might be considered as a strategy towards the broader goal. Parent Aware is a quality rating and improvement system for childcare (both home and center provided). There is a range from 1-4 star rating. In Scott County, the number of home childcare providers with a Parent Aware rating is extremely low (less than 20%). There are many more childcare center providers who have a Parent Aware rating and if the center has gone through an accreditation process, they automatically receive a 4 star rating.

Todd asked the group about their thoughts about working towards increasing the amount of providers who participate in Parent Aware. Marie said that might be hard to do. Many in home providers don't feel like the Parent Aware rating is [Scott County is a place where people are stable, connected, educated, and contributing](#)

a good use of their time or effort and often feels like another “hoop” to jump through that is unnecessary, especially, because Scott County has many high quality programs and many are full even without the Parent Aware rating. Scott County also has a very active and engaged group of providers in the Family Childcare Association which helps provide training, support, networking, etc. Scott County’s Family Childcare Association is one of the largest and most active in the state.

Kathy pointed out that even though providers don’t always see value in Parent Aware, there is a benefit to parents who receive scholarships. For families receiving scholarships, they receive up to \$7,500 if they enroll their child in a program with a 4 star provider, but only get ½ their original amount if the provider is a 3 star provider and no scholarship money if providers are only 1-2 stars. For many families with scholarships, finding childcare providers who have Parent Aware ratings can be difficult.

It was mentioned that in the past, partnerships have come together to train childcare providers for Parent Aware such as when Blue Cross and Blue Shield sponsored a training at no cost to the childcare providers.

### **Barriers Activity**

The steering committee asked the working groups to consider **why issues are happening, define the current reality, and root causes/barriers.**

By the February all group meeting, the goal is to have barriers defined. Kami pointed out that as we’ve already accomplished that, we’re in a good spot and we’ll keep moving forward.

Several individuals in the room participated in a Scott County Delivering What Matters (DWM) presentation. DWM tends to focus on what is happening, however, Educational Preparedness is focusing on why the issue is happening and how it can be fixed. Individuals who participated in the DWM presentation have agreed to pull together data as needed.

Overall, Scott County does well compared to other counties, however, there is still work to be done and it is important to remember that it may take several years for effects of the work we’re doing today to be seen.

Todd voiced concern that by focusing on deficits and not assets, the tone of the group and focus may not be as effective. Several in the group agreed. Lisa B said that barriers and deficits exist because we’re not meeting something and we need to figure that out. We can choose to frame our solutions in a positive light.

The group brainstormed a list of possible issues we have covered in previous meetings:

**Access to quality childcare (including affordability and a lack of infant openings)**

**Lack of early ID/screening**

**Unstable housing—frequently moving, switching school districts, etc.**

**Parents who don’t understand the importance of reading to their child**

**Lack of parenting education**

**Education is not valued; families are too busy, etc.**

**Screen time**

**Language and Cultural Barriers**

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**Health and mental health issues (either for child or for parents/caregivers)**

**Lack of a safe home environment (abuse, domestic abuse, etc.)**

**Lack of healthcare/inadequate prenatal care**

**Poverty**

At the next meeting, Kami would like the group to choose 2-3 issues to focus on and plan to complete a fishbone activity to dig further into the issues which might help reveal possible strategies to help fix some of the issues.

**Homework**

Take some time before our next meeting to think about the following:

1. We need a co-chair for our group. If you are interested, contact Kami Thompson ([priorlake@nhacademy.net](mailto:priorlake@nhacademy.net)), Jen Schultz ([jschultz@co.scott.mn.us](mailto:jschultz@co.scott.mn.us)) or Sarah Geffre ([sgeffre@scottlib.org](mailto:sgeffre@scottlib.org)).
2. Mark your calendars for 2017 meetings (see email from Sarah Geffre).
3. Think about which 2-3 issues you'd like to consider having the group focus on and work through the fishbone activity at the November meeting. It can be an issue on the list, or an issue that can be introduced at the November meeting.

**Next Meeting Date: Tuesday November 15, 2016 from 5:30-7:00 at the Shakopee Library.**

Minutes taken by Sarah Geffre