

Clay County Joint Powers Collaborative
Successful Partnerships Building Successful Families

**Truancy Intervention Program Work Group
Minutes**

**12 PM July 26, 2005
Room 4, Family Service Center**

Attendance: Jana Danielson (Clay County Court Services), Carol Beckstrom (Clay County Human Services – CWTCM); Bernie Lipp (D-G-F ISD #2164); Patty Kline (Lutheran Social Service), Deb Pender (Red River Area Learning Center), and Shelley Guida (The Village); and Alex Ishaug (TIP Coordinator) and Barbara Eiden-Molinaro (Transition Project Manager)

1. Barbara Eiden-Molinaro convened the meeting, welcomed new members and Bernie Lipp, who agreed to represent the school principals. She explained that although only one person represents partner agencies on work groups, because of the need to for Child Welfare-Targeted Case Management and truancy to be represented by Clay County Human Services, both Carol Beckman and Tracey Sunde will need to serve on this work group.
2. The notes from the June 27 meeting and the agenda were reviewed and approved by consensus.
3. Barbara reviewed the actions of the Board that affect the TIP Work Group:
 - a. Establishment of a standard eight percent administrative fee that will be paid to partners who employ Collaborative project staff. This includes all costs related to employing staff, including payroll, supervision and liability insurance.
 - b. The Collaborative's fiscal year is changing from September 1-August 31 to July 1-June 30, so the FY06 budget will be only ten months, through June 30, 2006.
 - c. A financial and work plan planning process will begin in March 2006 and the FY07 budget will be determined by late May-early June.
 - d. Beginning in FY07 Collaborative projects will only receive LCTS funds to leverage other funds, such as grants and third party reimbursements. This means that TIP Work Group must get Child Welfare-Targeted Case Management in place this year so that earning the funds in FY07 is assured.
 - e. All third party reimbursement, including Child Welfare-Targeted Case Management is to be considered Collaborative assets and may not be retained by partners beyond the amount due them in the Collaborative budget.
 - f. Approval of the recommendation from the TIP Work Group that Alex's contract be extended through August 31, with funding available to recruit and screen TIP staff.
 - g. Approval of the recommendation from the TIP Work Group that in order to provide program continuity the employing partner should be informed that it is the preference of the Collaborative that staff who are offered re-employment be hired at their current rate of pay.
 - h. Approval of the recommendation originating from the superintendents and adopted by the TIP Work Group that the focus of the TIP should include prevention and earlier intervention services at the elementary level, and the creation of stronger partnerships with parents.
4. The work group determined what needed to be done prior to or at the start of the school year:
 - a. The program budget must be developed and approved.
 - b. Job descriptions must be updated, and staff recruited.
 - c. Employing partner(s) must be identified.
 - d. Contact people must be established at each school for each TIP staff.
 - e. Staff must be recruited, hired and assigned to schools and caseloads established.
 - f. Staffing assignments must provide an appropriate level of service in Moorhead while serving the rural county schools in a proportionate manner.
 - g. The ages which the services will start and stop must be agreed upon.
 - h. The extent to which services will be proactive versus reactive, while part of the larger goal of having one county-wide program with uniform policies and procedures, must be addressed.
 - i. Offices for staff must be identified in the schools and staff must have access to computers in their schools.
 - j. The in-kind expectation of schools must be established and communicated.

5. The work group established the following FY06 TIP Work Plan:
 - a. Develop contracts and procedures to allow the program to earn Child Welfare-Targeted Case Management dollars
 - b. Address the differences in philosophies held by different schools regarding school attendance and the use of the program, with the goal of having one collaborative truancy intervention program with uniform policies and procedures.
 - c. Develop partnerships with parents that facilitate parent-school partnerships.
 - d. Develop strategies to ensure that TIP remains effective with limited LCTS funding.

6. The budget was drafted. Discussion reflected the tension between wanting to retain staff at their current rate of pay and the need for employing partners to hire staff with whom they were comfortable, at a rate of pay they could offer in good conscience, in light of their other staff and policies. While TIP staff were hired on a County grid, they received more frequent increases than County staff, and are therefore being paid at a higher level. This will make it a challenge to continue them at a rate which they might find reasonable. This needs to be balanced with the school's legitimate need for staff continuity.
 - a. Staffing levels were increased to meet the needs of the Moorhead schools and to appropriately serve rural county schools. Decisions were made on the basis of enrollment and caseload.
 - b. Much discussion was held regarding the need for wages to reflect a compromise between the lower non-profit pay scale and the higher education and County scale. A base hourly rate of \$12/hour was established, with 5% additional available for each year of experience up to three years. After discussing what was known about potential employing partners benefits, it was assumed that all staff working 32 hours a week or more would be eligible for benefits, no matter the employing partner. This will have to be verified however.
 - c. The impact of the changes on current staff was discussed. Schools want their staff back, and believe continuity is necessary for program effectiveness. There are only five remaining staff, three of whom are rostered, or non-benefited staff, and two of whom are benefited. Under the pay scale established, rostered staff would make less per hour in wages, but would earn approximately as much on an hourly basis when benefits are included. The two benefited staff would be quite a bit below the highest rate available, with three years of experience. Further discussion will need to be held regarding who might employ these staff and how they could be re-employed at or near their current pay rates.
 - d. Staff will be hired on a school year contract of 184 days. The proposed budget does not reflect summer programming, which will begin in June. At the time the FY07 budget is developed next spring, the summer 2006 budget will be developed. Monies that will be expended prior to June 30 for this summer budget will have to be approved as a supplemental FY06 budget. Since students are in school for 170-175 days, the 184 day contract allows staff to participate in staff in-services, as well as complete program records at the end of terms.
 - e. Other non-wage/benefit budget items were adopted based on the TIP sub-committee proposal developed this spring.

7. In order to expedite hiring staff by or near the beginning of the school year, Alex was asked to place an ad for staff reflecting the job qualifications required for staff to earn Child Welfare-Targeted Case Management dollars. Since the employing partner(s) have not been identified, the ad will instruct application materials to be sent to the Collaborative's address. Alex will alert Cynthia to expect them.

8. The schedule for the next meeting was discussed. Principals are expected to be back on or before August 8. Given the amount of work to be done in August, the work group must meet as early as possible. Therefore the next meeting of the work group will be 10 AM August 8. Since this is immediately adjacent to the Collaborative Finance Board meeting, and since some of those present have appointments immediately before and after this meeting, it was decided that there was a need to meet at the Family Service Center in Moorhead, rather than at the D-G-F High School in Glyndon. It was hoped that as many principals as possible could attend this meeting, as their involvement is crucial to moving forward.

9. The meeting was adjourned with a reminder of the next meeting: 10 AM-Noon Aug. 8, Family Service Center.