

## Clay County Collaborative Administrative Group Minutes

Wednesday, 17 December 2008

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Lakeland Mental Health Center,  
1010 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave. S., Moorhead

*In attendance:* Mark Altenburg (Rural Enrichment and Counseling Headquarters), Terry Atherton (The Arc of West Central Minnesota), Donna Baker (Lakeland Mental Health Center), Randy Bruer (Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton ISD #2164), Lynne Kovash (Moorhead ISD #152), Lanette Krinsky (Children's Mental Health LAC), Scott Loeslie (Barnesville ISD #146), Barry Nelson (Metro Youth Partnership), Pam Ness (Lakes Country Service Coop), Jane Patrick (LCTS Coordinator), Joe Pederson (Lakes and Prairie Community Action), Rhonda Porter (Clay County Social Services), Barry Steen (West Central Regional Juvenile Center), Carolyn Strnad (IIIP work group), Lori Ward (Lakes and Prairie Community Action), Sandi Zaleski (The Village Family Service Center), Dawn Tommerdahl (Collaborative Coordinator); *Guest presenters:* *Family Advocates from the Truancy Intervention Program:* Jose Sanchez, LaRae Goeden (Moorhead High), Michael Ochoa (Horizon Middle School), Stacy Nielsen (Red River Area Learning Center), Danielle Johnson (student), Kyle Geaumont (Outer County Schools), Laura Carr (Moorhead elementary schools)

Dawn welcomed the group and we did a round of introductions.

We began the meeting with the **Truancy Intervention Program presentation.**

Jose introduced the presentation and then turned it over to staff who each described their daily duties and then passed out statistics from their school.

- LaRae described the process she goes through in identifying students with three or more absences, contacting students, school staff, parents, etc.
- Michael noted that the new principal at Horizon has allowed the program to implement new interventions that have improved attendance. He has a Start class (every child at Horizon is assigned to a start class) with students who are or have been involved in the truancy program.
- Stacy explained that even though she is working a smaller number of students, they have higher needs and have often been placed at Red River because of truancy. She included a case study of a student who's worked well with court. She noted that Judge Lisa Borgen has taken all of the truancy cases. She schedules hearings more frequently than the required six months. She is also interested in other aspects of their lives, like grades, etc. She is also sending students to ShelterCare if they are on in school or out of school suspension. Family advocates are now considered "parties" which means they are required to attend court and take an active role in the proceedings. Stacy also provided a sample letter she sent out to local businesses to ask for contributions to a drawing for incentives. Stacy shared Danielle's story with the group. People thanked her for attending and encouraged her to share her story with her peers.
- Kyle visits each school every other week or as needed. The school secretaries let her know which students need attention. She has noticed that some students are dropping out to be home-schooled or take online courses without informing anyone. She follows up. Kyle gave an example of how the information she provides has been used court. LaRae is helping Kyle with the after-school program in Ulen-Hitterdal.
- Laura works with children in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, so she would file educational neglect instead of truancy. She's only filed on one family so far this year. She meets weekly with school staff at Asp and Hopkins and bi-weekly at Reinertson to keep them up-to-date on the students she's working with. Students with issues of chronic absence and/or tardiness have begun an incentive program and are meeting with Laura weekly. She also makes home visits. She receives emails from teachers about students they're concerned about. Joe suggested collecting data about single parent families and family income.

- Joe also wondered how many of the students have attended Head Start. In response to a question, staff have noticed that some absences are due to older children are staying home to babysit their younger siblings. Laura noted that for all family advocates, their *attempts* at contacting a parent, for example, are not included in the data they track – they only track the actual contacts.
- Jose passed out the packet that Cheryl Duysen (County Attorney) gives to parents. She also distributes a list of tips for parents based on the school's truancy policy. We watched the videos that are shown at the County Attorney (CAMP) meeting. Jose closed by reminding the group that truancy is a community problem because most of the students will remain in our area.

Following the presentation we moved on to the rest of the agenda. Minutes from the 11/19/08 were unanimously approved. (Barry N./Sandi) No changes were made to today's agenda.

### **Nuts & bolts**

- ✦ *Financial report/FY09 budget:* Our auditor at Eide Bailly has submitted the final draft of our audit to an audit manager for review. We will have it shortly. We have received the check from the County to reimburse the Children's Mental Health work group for respite and flex paid in FY08 for children who had Rule 79 case management.

*Motion to approve spending \$500 for parent stipends in January was unanimously approved. (Donna/Randy)*

- ✦ *LCTS report:* Jane informed the group that she has been in contact with the recorders at all sites and will be in further contact before the reporting changes for random moments take place on January 1. She has received word from the State that the change from a regional to a state-wide claiming pool could result in a 12% increase in our earnings. Jane requested that we delay discussion of the validator (another random moment reporting change) until after we have more defined expectations from the state.
- ✦ *Coordinator's report:* Dawn noted that the group for fathers of young children will begin in January. She thanked everyone for their commitment to the work of the Collaborative and to their support of staff members' involvement in the various programs.

### **Discussion**

- Family Support Model grant:
  - Action needed: *Motion to support the Family Support Model work group/program in applying for a \$25,000 grant from the Sheltering Arms Foundation to expand the program by .5 FTE passed unanimously. (Joe/Mark)*
- Further discussion on *strategic planning:* Questions for work groups were approved. Work groups will discuss the questions at their January and February. Tentative dates for the strategic planning are Monday, April 20 at 1 p.m. or Wednesday, April 22 at 9 a.m. Barry noted that it's important to put some work in before the strategic planning session. Dawn will send out questions for Administrative Group to discuss with their organizations. Dawn will contact strategic planners and come with recommendations next month.
- Opportunities for collaboration
  - Joe announced that the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition will host an event in St. Paul about ending poverty by 2020 on January 21. There will also be a local event at St. Joseph's Church in Moorhead from 3 – 4:30. Bishop Larry Wohlrabe (ELCA) and Bishop (Crookston Diocese) have committed to speak. The interim report is out – Joe has copies if anyone would like a copy. Unallotment could start tomorrow.
  - Lakes and Prairies applied for the Bremer grant we discussed last month. He will keep us posted on who will

**Other**

- Sector representatives remained after the meeting for a few minutes and selected the following:
  - Chair: Mark
  - Vice-chair: Carolyn

The next chair should come from the education sector as parent, government and now non-profit sectors have had their turns since the 2005 reorganization.

*Next meeting: Wednesday, January 28, 3:30 – 5 p.m., host: \_\_\_\_\_*

Respectfully submitted,  
Dawn Tommerdahl  
Collaborative Coordinator