

	Date:	February 5, 2009
	Time:	10:00 am
	Location:	NWHU
	Chair:	Carolyn Skirten
	Recorder	Debby Cousineau
Type of meeting:	Rainy River District Best Start Network Meeting	
Participants:	Kim Gardiman, Leanne Mineault, Carolyn Skirten , Donna Cutler, Kim Anderson, Ann Anderson, Nicole Cheetam, Tammy Faykes, Deb Cousineau, Judy Lindholm	
Regrets:	Teresa Larson, Anne-Marie Armstrong, David Sharp, Mildred Beck, Sandra Russell. Ron Fryer	
Absent:	Jeff Warner	

1) WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

Kim Anderson reported that Ron Fryer will be the acting principal at St. Michael's school while Darlene Fejos-Rousseau is on maternity leave. Kim will be the representative for the Northwest Catholic District School Board on the network.

There was some confusion in regards to organizing the meeting amenities and handouts. For previous meetings, the DSSAB representative made the lunch arrangements, meeting handouts etc as they hold the planning dollars. Unfortunately Mildred Beck was unable to attend this meeting, but her role with the network & meeting arrangements will be clarified.

Brenda Ferris-Hyatt, principal of Mine Centre School, will step down from the network as the Mine Centre school is now under the jurisdiction of the Rainy River District School Board. Ann Anderson is the representative for that school board.

Carol-Lynne Oldale will replace Donna Johnson as the Education Officer with the Ministry of Education, Thunder Bay office.

2) OUR VISION: *"The Best Start for ALL Children"*

3) APPROVAL AND ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Agenda was approved with 1 addition from Ann Anderson.

4) REVIEW OF MINUTES – November 6, 2008

The minutes were accepted as presented.

5) ONGOING BUSINESS:

a) Update of Actions from November 6, 2008 meeting

- 1) Ann Anderson – survey for ECE & Kindergarten staff regarding “Summer Celebration” and preferences.

Evaluation following the “Summer Celebration” included participant ratings for overall event, location, meals and timing of event. The new survey will include best time for event and topics for next event. Will also include if anything else participants would like to see.

Could possibly do survey through survey monkey, but all potential participants may not have access to computer.

The network will send out paper survey to potential participants. Leanne indicated that DACS can create a database to tabulate information. We must ensure that questions are in a format that can be entered into the database.

Database will also need to include contact information.

**ACTION: 1. Ann to create survey and email to Leanne.
2. Leanne will have DACS create a database & compile data.**

- 2) Leanne Minneault – update regarding the network evaluation. The DACS were asked to make a workplan by April 1, 2009 which is to include the Best Start network evaluations. The networks will have an opportunity to review the evaluation. Leanne will keep the network informed.
- 3) Posting of the letter from the network to Dr. Pascal on the DSSAB website. This item is forwarded to the next network meeting.
- 4) Carolyn – update regarding Infant Development Program Review
 - workers are going to receive training on how to journal one week of their work. This will then be reviewed and a report will be developed. No recommendations are to be made. Evaluators will be coming to the area but most of it will be done via email.
 - Also, Joanne Davis has a new position at FACS and will not be doing child development.

b) Committee Reports:

Recruiting Partners Committee (Ann Anderson)

ECE-JK Teacher Exchange continues to be piloted. The Best Start Network needs to make Early Learning & Kindergarten staff aware of the project. So far only 2 people have participated, with positive feedback about the experience.

Should the Communication Committee do a campaign to promote this project?

ACTION: Kim Anderson will make a brochure outlining project to be provided to potential participants. This will be sent by February 19 to Best Start Network members.

Communication Committee (Leanne Minneault)

A member review was done of the committee. Currently 10 people sit on this committee, with representation from both networks. Judy Lindholm is the aboriginal consultant for the committee.

The Kenora district wanted an educational consultant on the network, however if no interest is expressed from that network, Kim Anderson will act as the educational representative for both areas.

The Best Start banner is ready & will be housed at the DSSAB office on Scott Street after being displayed at the "Understanding the Early Years" conference in Dryden.

The decals are also ready.

Network members will be requested to provide contact information for all of the agencies/services that they represent on the network.

The Communication Committee will be participating in a facilitated planning session on March 11 in Dryden. Shannon Robinson, Health Promotion Coordinator with the Northwestern Health Unit will be facilitating the session which will focus on developing and planning for communication campaigns.

c) Financial Update

(Carolyn Skirten provided information on behalf of Mildred Beck)

The Ministry of Children & Youth Services now requires invoices from all agencies who received capital dollars from the Best Start network. Currently the Lake of the Woods Child Development Centre (CDC) administers the money and dispurses money based on the direction of the networks. The CDC was told by the Ministry that it is the Network's responsibility to obtain these invoices.

Mildred will send letters to the agencies to get these invoices. Mildred will also be in contact with Sandra Russell to determine deadlines.

Capital dollars were provided to:

Atikokan Non Profit Daycare
Rainy River District School Board
United Native Friendship Centre
Northwest Catholic District School Board

ACTION: The Best Start Network will follow-up to ensure all invoices are received.

d)Ministry Update

No report was provided for this meeting.

e) Coalition Updates/Reports

Tammy Faykes – Atikokan Coalition:

Currently the coalition is involved in nutritious food boxes and the Safe Kids “Buckle Up Ontario” campaign.

Other activities include “Make & Take” community kitchen program for young mothers. This is very successful and is a partnership of FACS, Crisis Centre, ANFC, library , and the NWHU.

The Atikokan Non Profit Daycare purchased 20 pairs of snow shoes to promote physical activity. They are free to use and this has also been very successful.

The coalition continues to be involved in providing car seat coupons. Last year they provided 16 coupons and need to do some fundraising in order to continue this program.

Transportation continues to be an issue for families in Atikokan and last year \$1400 was spent by the coalition in transportation vouchers. The municipality provided \$1000 of this money, and the coalition will be going back to the town to ask for money again for this year.

This year the coalition will be focusing on “Grow a Row”, a community garden. Poverty awareness is a focus in the coalition.

Children programs include:

- “Rock & Read” at the OEYC/Best Start Hub
- “Mother Goose” at the library
- “Alphabet Soup” at the Best Start Hub
- “ Positive Parenting” through FACS

Coming Together for Kids (Fort Frances – Rainy River coalition)

Currently there is not a representative from this coalition on our network. A coalition representative needs to be identified.

ACTION: Kim Gardiman will contact CTFK coalition to determine network representative.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a) Transition Plan Rollout (Ann Anderson)

Drafts were provided for review.

Letters will be sent to agency outlining transition plan. Parents are not to be given package and asked to fill it out.

Expectations of the transitioning agency & receiving school board are outlined in the transition plan. The transitioning agency will be the agency with whom the child is most involved. They will work with the family to complete the booklet and forward to the appropriate school board.

This will require an ongoing collaboration plan. Early learning sites and school boards will need to develop a system to ensure better communication.

All preschool agencies/service providers will need to create the transition plans.

How are we going to roll the transition plan out? Who do we send it to? How do we get the information out?

- the network members will present it to the agencies/service providers that they represent.
- A press release will be prepared outlining the new transition plan
- The transition plan will be put into effect during the 2009-2010 school year.
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ACTION (all network members)

1. **Distribute the transition plan to all agencies/service providers that you represent.**
2. **Send Ann dates as to when you will be doing the presentation of the transition plan.**

It is recommended that the transition plan also be shared with the Kenora Best Start Network.

b) HUB Update

The United Native Friendship Centre has been chosen to house the Best Start Aboriginal Hub in Fort Frances. The location will be at the Aboriginal Head Start building. The grand opening will be Friday March 13, 2009.

An update regarding the renovation of the Sears Building in Rainy River will be provided by Mildred Beck at the next network meeting.

In January, Best Start & Child Care staff attended a 2 day child development workshop. The presenter was Line Perron from Early Child Development Support Services.

c) Understanding the Early Years North Conference

This conference is scheduled to be held on February 18, 2009 in Dryden. Invitations have been distributed with 85 registrations received to date. There have been 35 registrations received for the evening session. The deadline for registration is February 6, 2009.

7. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS:

Junior Kindergarten referral pathways (Ann Anderson):

- how do JK teachers know where to send referrals for JK students in need of services?
Is currently a service inventory available
- What is the developmental screening tool that is being used?
FACS – “DISC Preschool Screen” (DPS) & administration time is about 30 to 60 minutes per child.

FACS could do a developmental screen on the JK students in the classroom. Currently goes into the Best Start Hubs, daycares & nursery schools to do developmental screens.

- Behavioural issues
Refer to HB/HC, FACS, or the Best Start Hubs for assistance

Discussion:

- It is important to keep in mind that many High Risk families don't access services
- Need to empower parents
- Transportation is a huge barrier in our district.
- We need to get the children in service before entering Junior Kindergarten
- Full day Junior Kindergarten may be beneficial (1/2 day JK, 1/2 day development)

Why aren't we as a network looking into transportation since it is such a huge barrier to service in our district?

8. CORRESPONDENCE No correspondence to report.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – April 2, 2009 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Northwestern Health Unit Board Room
396 Scott Street
Fort Frances

10.. Meeting Adjournment