

Early On® Center for Higher Education
Advisory Group Meeting Summary
June 6, 2008

The Early On® Center for Higher Education, an Innovative Project of Clinton County RESA, is Michigan's new pre-service initiative to support the development of highly qualified early intervention personnel to work with infants and toddlers, birth to three with disabilities and/or special needs, and their families. The Early On Center will work to strengthen learning experiences for college students so they are knowledgeable of Early On® Michigan and competent in their future work with families of infants and toddlers.

Advisory group members in attendance: Jean Allison, Cheryl Bloomquist, Lindy Buch, Julie Ricks-Doneen, Mary Ann Ellis, Barbara Harris, Elizabeth Grace, Caryn Pack Ivey, Laura Jensen-Hunt, Stephanie Peters, Fran Quinnel, Katie Silverman, Louanne Utzinger, Ellen Whipple, Donna Wilber and Diane Wilcox.

Staff in attendance: Christine Callahan, Sr. Barbara Cline, Janice Fialka, Laura Fuciarelli, Meg McSweeney and Carol Spaman.

Early On Center Updates:

- **Faculty Grants:** Christy announced that four applications were received. An independent panel (representing faculty, researchers, providers, and parents) reviewed the applications and recommended funding two grants. The Clinton County RESA Board of Education approved funding to Julie Ricks-Doneen at Oakland University and Harold Johnson at Michigan State University. Ms. Doneen's research includes a literature review and interviews with early intervention, birth to three, providers and families regarding their experiences with inclusion and natural environments. From this research, an annotated bibliography and several case studies will be developed for use in classrooms. The case studies will be made available to faculty through the Early On Center. Mr. Johnson's proposal involves use of technology to build the network among faculty, students, practitioners, and families so they may communicate and problem solve together, facilitating student understanding of practice and practice informed by research and student activities.

- **“Telling Our Stories” Wednesday August 20, 2008 9:00 am - 2:30pm** at the *Early On®* Training and TA Office in Dewitt, MI. Janice announced a workshop for family members of young children with disabilities. *Telling Our Stories* is a one-day workshop designed to prepare family members to tell their stories to college students/future professionals. Participants will learn to organize and share their experiences in a presentation to college students who will work with families of children, birth to age three, with disabilities. The invited trainer for the day is Jan Moss, Director of the Oklahoma Center for Interdisciplinary Learning and Leadership, a national trainer, a parent, and the developer of the *Telling Our Stories* training. There is no cost to the participants. State guidelines for reimbursement and

mileage will be followed.

Registration is available now at www.eotta.ccesa.org. Please spread the word.

Understanding the Early Childhood Approval Letter, Certification and Endorsement Processes of the Michigan Department of Education: Lundy Buch, Director of the MDE Office of Early Childhood and Family Services:

The group engaged in a presentation by Lindy, followed by conversation about the history of the credentialing system within the state systems. As a result a workgroup will be formed to develop a proposal for a credential/endorsement process for personnel working in early intervention, birth to three, in Michigan. (*Note: if you are interested in being part of the workgroup, contact Meg McSweeney, mcsweeney_m@ccresa.org and Janice Fialka, fialka_j@ccresa.org*)

Colloquium Planning: through group discussion and individual reflection, these recommendations were made for the September 19, 2008, one-day colloquium for faculty and graduate students, in birth to three:

- **Confirmed Time: 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**
- **Confirmed Location: Lansing Community College Main Campus, Health and Human Services Building**
- **Confirmed Title : *Let's Start at the Very Beginning***
- **Suggestion: Blend the Keynote and the panel discussion around the topic "What is Effective Early Intervention, Birth to Three?"** Discussion underscored the importance of hearing the family voices, as well as providers and faculty. Several names were suggested as lead off/keynote speaker/s. We definitely want it to be someone very familiar with birth to three. Suggestions were also made for panel members representing Michigan families and providers. The planning committee will follow-up on the suggestions and update the group through the wiki page about the colloquium.
- **Roundtables:**
 - possibly only time for two series of roundtable discussions rather than the three planned;
 - make sure there is sufficient time for all voices to be heard;
 - spread out the tables so that they are not all in one room;
 - keep the idea of an all day, drop in media/technology demonstration room and include in there a table to share syllabi and other resources.
 - keep the tables to about 8 people; will need at least 8 topics/roundtables simultaneous.
 - offer a summary/compilation of all roundtables to participants/perhaps in a booklet form or a CD
 - advisory members present were asked to rank their top three or four topics from the selection of titles distributed/suggest additional also: Results are rank listed below:
 - Top Five instructional activities
 - Transdisciplinary relationships, roles and responsibilities

- Implications of new early childhood professional development standards
- Effective service learning activities and community collaborations
- Understanding and supporting families who have received life changing news
- Latest research/evidence based practice models

Further comments and suggestions for presenters are encouraged. The *Early On*® Center for Higher Education wikispace is one forum for that discussion.

Family Night at the Fieldhouse: Innovative Model for Pre-Service Training on Authentic Inclusion – Katie Silverman, College of Education, University of Michigan Dearborn. As part of community building among the advisory group members as we get to know each other better, Katie showed a PowerPoint about some of the collaborations University of Michigan Dearborn early childhood department is doing with Oakwood Health Care Program for Exceptional Families. Thank you Katie for being the first to volunteer!

Demonstrations

- The new *Early On*® Center website was shared. It is currently under construction. The site is intended to be available by late summer. It will be a public site with links to a multitude of resources and contacts about early intervention, birth to three.
- The new *Early On*® Center Wikispace, currently open and ready for use at ~ <http://mi-earlyoncenter-highered.wiki.educ.msu.edu/>, was introduced. This site is open to members only. All advisory members were alerted to watch for an invitation to join the site in their email by June 12, 2008. Laura Jensen-Hunt cautioned everyone to check your spam folder, in case the invitation gets diverted into there. The invitation will have 'Meg McSweeney invites you' in the subject line and the pages will appear under the auspices of Michigan State University College of Education, which has generously allowed the use of their wikispaces system.

The wikispace will provide a forum for faculty, students, providers and families to have in-depth conversations and to upload significant documents for sharing current research about early intervention, birth to three. Specific questions/topics will be targeted each month. Discussions and documents will be archived for future reference.

The meeting closed with a short film clip quoting Winton Marsalis about the beauty of sometimes discordant voices working together to achieve harmony. The source is the public television documentary about jazz, by Ken Burns.

The next meeting will be the Colloquium for faculty on September 19, 2008.

We are planning the calendar for the next year and will be using an on-line program called 'Meeting Wizard' to do so. Look for an email from Meeting Wizard (and Meg McSweeney) by June 17, through which you can respond/vote about the best dates for yourself.

In preparation for that email from Meeting Wizard: the choices for the next three meetings after September 19 are:

- 1. November 7, November 21 or December 5*
- 2. February 6, February 20, or February 27*
- 3. May 15, June 5, or June 12*

Thank you to all who were able to attend. It was a productive, meaningful gathering.