

Membership Meeting Summary

September 11, 2006

1:30 p.m. Conference Room, MAUW – 1627 Lake Lansing Road

CALL TO ORDER: by Michele Strasz.

INTRODUCTIONS OF ATTENDEES.

Adolf Armbruster, Holy Cross Children's Services

Amy Krug, Priority Children

Betty Tableman, MI Association for Infant Mental Health

Bill Long, Former MCCF Chair

Bree Anderson, MNYF

Erin Stringfellow, UM intern, MLHS

Jane Zehnder-Merrell, MI League for Human Services

Jeff Sadler, Children's Trust Fund

Jennifer Mora, MPCA

Jon Tomlanovich, MAISA

Mary Sutton, MI After School Partnership

Michele Corey, Michigan's Children

Michele Strasz, MI Council for Maternal and Child Health

Pat Sorenson, Michigan's Children

Paul Shaheen, MI Council for Maternal and Child Health

Shannon Kozole, MNYF

Siobhan Taylor, Michigan's Children

Susan Miller, Early Learning MI via phone

AGENDA: approved

MAY MINUTES: approval delayed until the next meeting as no one had a copy with them.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Breeann reported that as of August 31st the balance of MCCF accounts was: Checking-\$208; Savings- \$1,027.61 for a total of \$1,235.80.

MEMBERSHIP: renewals will be due in the new year. At the next meeting we can discuss a membership drive.

UPDATE ON ELECTION ACTIVITIES

- **Candidate List:** *Election 2006: Key General Election Races to Target for Child and Family Advocates* has been updated and will be posted on the MCCF website. Members are urged to contact BOTH candidates to conduct interviews and reinforce items in the Children's Agenda. Michele S. offered to coordinate and assist in any way.
- **Children's Agenda 2006:** Michele S. reported that copies were sent to all candidates in the upcoming election, including Congressional races. It might also be a way of gauging awareness and use of the Agenda by candidates.
- **Member Activities:** Priority Children sent a letter of congratulations with materials to all Genesee County candidates, including county commissioners. Michigan's Children has Candidate Questions available on their website. The UP is having a candidate forum for all candidates on October 12th. Traverse City is having an candidate forum. The candidate forum sponsored by the UM and MCMCH has not yet been scheduled.

BALLOT PROPOSALS

- **SOS Ballot Proposal 6:** Jane reported that the **Defend Michigan Coalition** successfully challenged this proposal. The Board of Canvassers on the recommendation of their staff unanimously rejected the proposal because it lacked enough valid signatures. They fell short by roughly 12,000 names. The Proposal 6 supporters intend to appeal, but they have little hope of prevailing based on legal history. Bills still need to be paid, totaling a few hundred thousand dollars, and the need to advocate for election reform is clear. The proposal supporters plan to return in 2008. (It took them three tries to be successful in Colorado.) There is also talk of maintaining the coalition in some form to press for full reinstatement of revenue lost from the repeal of the Single Business Tax.

A motion, proposed by Bill Long and seconded by Paul Shaheen, to contribute to the expenses of Defend Michigan with \$50 passed.

- **Civil Rights Initiative:** Michigan United has an active Speakers Bureau if anyone wants a presentation for a meeting or a board.
- **K-16 Ballot Proposal:** Jon reported that this proposal has mixed response within the education community. The initial impetus was to force the legislature to address the need for revenue in the General Fund. The educational alliance still supports but higher ed has backed out. The proposal would have devastating impact on health and human services if no new revenue is available, as it will pull more dollars from a stagnant General Fund for education. Paul stated there may be potential in the lame duck session to address the structural deficit, and agencies with multi-client lobbyists might consider exerting pressure to this end. There is a real concern that with the loss of seasoned term-limited legislators, there may not be the knowledge and the expertise in the coming session to get the job done.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

- **Early Childhood:**
 - **HB6285:** Pat reported that HB6285 (and HB6286 that would require an optional parenting class in the virtual high school) have been introduced by Rep Meyer in the Early Childhood Intervention Sub-Committee of the House Education Committee. This bill provides a statutory or legal base for the Children's Trust Fund to be the vehicle for federal and state dollars from the Departments of Education, Health, and Human Services for 0-3 prevention programs. (Right now this program is included in the budget boilerplate each year in the School Aid, DCH, and DHS budgets—this requires a yearly budget battle.) The ZFAN network that gets funding through this program should let their legislators know how important these programs are. There seems to be no opposition at this point. The bill hasn't been scheduled for a hearing so please urge subcommittee members (Reps Tom Meyer, Jack Hoogendyk, Robert Gosselin, Fred Miller, Virgil Smith) to support the bill.

- **Preschool funding:** Pat shared a summary of an analysis by the Senate Fiscal Agency about the shortfall in preschool funding. Despite an increase of \$6 million for the Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP) in 2006-07, many school districts did not receive support. According to the report, this shortfall occurred mainly for three reasons:
 1. **New applicants:** 23 new applicants requested 344 new slots at a cost of \$1.14 million
 2. **Full-day funding:** option has resulted in expanded services in large urban districts where many eligible children were previously unserved. The number (3,638) of full-day slots requested in 06-07 totals more than \$24 million, representing over 30 percent of the total MSRP appropriation (\$78.6 million).
 3. **Parental involvement and education:** The amount for this purpose has grown from \$2.8 million in 2003-04 to \$4.3 million in 06-07—a loss of 1,303 MSRP slots for four-year-olds.

An additional \$14.9 million would be needed to fund requests from all applicants. Overall this is good news that more eligible children in urban areas can participate in MSRP, but clearly more funding is needed to support the demand for preschool programs. For more information read the Budget Basics (<http://www.michiganschildren.org/images/stories/BudgetBasics/2006/msrp%20shortfall.doc>) or Senate or Fiscal Report (<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/sfa/Publications/Issues/SchoolReadiness/SchoolReadiness.pdf>).

- **Adolescence:** Michele Corey has offered to convene this Ad Hoc committee to focus on out-of-school youth and make short- and long-term proposals for a policy agenda. The committee would promote a focus about issues affecting youth at risk. The initial meeting would occur in October. Interested members should contact her corey.michele@michiganschildren.org

OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES : Concerns were expressed about the upcoming lame duck session, and what bills might be positioned to move that we would oppose.

- **HB 5267:** would require presumptive joint physical custody after divorce unless a parent is unfit, unwilling or unable to care for the child. Betty is concerned about the potential impact of the discontinuity in care for young children and asked that we monitor this bill. Introduced Oct. 6, 2005 and referred to the House Family & Children Services Committee, it has not moved as of this date. Based on past experience, unless there is some major pressure to address this bill now, it appears unlikely to get much attention the remainder of this year. We will keep alert, but see no need to address it further as of now.
- **EITC:** Jane reported a state earned income tax credit (SB 453) was passed on Sept 5th in the House and sent to the Governor. A state credit equal to 20 percent of the federal credit will be phased in over two years, and the additional income will assist the working poor of the state. For example, a single mother with two children making less than \$31,000 could be eligible for up to \$2,662 in a federal credit matched by \$262 from the state in 2008. Estimates suggest the cost to the state General Fund would be \$95 million in 2008 and \$250 million in 2009, largely because of the increase from 10 to 20 percent of the federal EITC.

MCCF will send a thank you to Senator Bob Emerson who championed the cause and Governor Granholm who supported the adoption of a state EITC.

CHILDREN'S AGENDA 2007: Michele S will send an e-mail inviting members to participate in developing the 07 agenda. A meeting will be set for mid-October to have a proposal ready for the November membership meeting.

DISCUSSION OF BUDGET

- **Health cuts:** \$37 million will be needed in cuts the Department of Community Health must make in the coming months. The legislature mandated the cuts but did not determine where they would be made.
- **Family Responsibility Demonstration:** In four pilot sites women with infants in TANF program will be able to opt into working on family development as opposed to formal work activities. Planning will start in October with sites to be selected, tentatively Grand Rapids, Flint and Detroit and one other. Mothers will be linked to a team with infant and maternal support services.
- **Preventive Care for Families:** Roughly \$17 million was targeted to increased coverage for primary care visits for adult and child health prevention services -. Independent of budget arrangements, the qualified health plans are working collaboratively to improve prevention services, specifically prenatal, perinatal health, and adolescent care initiatives.
- **Family Planning and Primary Care Access Increased:** Through the Family Planning Waiver ("Plan First") unintended pregnancies should be reduced. Health care coverage will be extended indefinitely to new mothers over 18 with income under 185 percent of poverty. Family planning will be extended to women with income under 250 percent of poverty. The plan started July 1, 2006.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- **October 18 (8-4:30)**– *Neurodevelopmental Disorders in Children/Youth: Strategies for Social/Emotional Success Annual Tuuri Day Conference* Mott Children's Health Center www.mottchc.org
- **October 19** in Marquette and **November 6** in Lansing: **Parenting Awareness Annual Conference** www.preventionnetwork.org (click on PAM on left)
- **November 2,3 and Nov 30-Dec 1:** Workshops on Cognitive Behavior Therapy by Dr. James A. Pretzer – Priority Children kids@prioritychildren.org

NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 13 from 1:30 to 3 p.m. @ MAUW

Meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Zehnder-Merrell

Michigan League for Human Services