

**MAISA Early Childhood Committee**  
Thursday, March 27, 2008, 10:00 a.m.  
MELG Building, MASA Conference Room, Lansing, Michigan

**Members Present:** Gerri Allen (MSPRA Liaison), Michele Brahaney (Monroe ISD), Lindy Buch (MDE), Yvonne Donohoe (remote, TBA ISD), Carl III (Allegan ESA), Sue Javid (Macomb ISD), Chris Kolb (ECIC), Lena Montgomery (Wayne RESA), Michelle Nicholson (Ingham ISD), Johanna Ostwald (remote, Dickinson-Iron ISD), Whitney Pavlov, Stephanie Peters (Ingham ISD), Elaine Smiley (Charlevoix-Emmet ISD), Thomas Svitkovich (Chair), Denise VanDyken (Allegan ESA), Bill Witt (MDE Liaison).

- I. The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by Thomas Svitkovich and participants introduced themselves. The minutes were accepted with corrections—corrected version will be sent.
  
- II. **State and Federal Programming for Newborn to Five:** On-line and printable drafts of the “State and Federal Programming for Newborn to Five” document were presented by Sue Javid for committee review. The online version lists programs and provides direct links to each program’s web page. The printable version provides detailed information on each program. Since this information changes, the printable version would need to be updated regularly. These resources were developed for district administrators, and some have said they want to distribute the printable version to staff. The committee agreed that there is value to having both versions.

The committee also discussed next steps, including a process and a timeline for completion. Each program will be asked to send edits to Sue and sign off on the accuracy of the information provided on their page of the printable version by April 9, 2008. Sue will finish a final draft, have it formatted and send it to the committee via email before the April meeting. The committee will approve the content of the final draft at the April 23, 2008 meeting with distribution (as a PDF) planned for May. It will be published with a release date and reviewed/updated annually after the budget is finalized and program changes have been made. The online version will be finalized by Macomb and sent to MASA to be posted on the website. Macomb will keep the links updated (though the programs themselves are responsible to keep their web pages updated). A communication piece is needed to let everyone know the information is available.

- III. **Low or No Cost Ideas for ISDs:** Low and No Cost Ideas flyers were distributed at the MAISA Superintendent group and received a favorable response from Wayne County superintendents. Lena will continue to edit and update this as new ideas are submitted. The flyer will be emailed to the committee. It can be localized with logos. It will be distributed again at the June MAISA quarterly meeting along with the “State and Federal Programming” piece.

The committee also discussed next steps, including distribution of the flyer at the June quarterly meeting, the development of a marketing plan and input from superintendents on current activities and ideas.

- IV. **Legislative Update:** No report.

- V. Status of Early Childhood Investment Corporation:** Chris Kolb reported that 11 communities were selected through the RFP process to become Great Start communities. As of April 2008 there will be 32 collaboratives in the state, with 25 yet to be funded. There were 28 responses to the RFP out of the 34 that were previously unfunded. There will not be another RFP process to fund the remaining communities if and when funding becomes available. Of the 57 ISDs in Michigan, 41 have signed interlocal agreements and appointed representatives to the ECIC Board. A question was raised regarding this committee's role with ECIC. Chris encouraged us to educate legislators that it is needed by all communities, saying that it has helped to generate local funding and produces a huge return on the investment. The committee also discussed next steps, including defining this committee's role with ECIC.

## **VI. Whole Committee Discussion**

**Methods to increase MSRP Quality:** Lindy reported that, while MSRP has the program quality assessment (PQA) instrument, MDE is not staffed to monitor program quality closely. They would like this to be done by ISDs through consortia of MSRP programs. Issues of concern include the legal status of MSRP as a funding stream and not a program. Since MSRP is not an official program, MSRP teachers cannot earn tenure. This creates a revolving door that becomes a quality issue—teachers get their foot in the door in a district and soon move on to a position that can earn tenure. High staff turnover leads to lower quality. MSRP needs to be out of the legislative boilerplate, increase its status by branding it as an entity and give MDE rule-making authority. Funding distribution would still be in the State Aid Act, but rules would become more consistent. Early childhood experts would decide what is effective rather than the legislature making those types of decisions. This committee needs to be represented when the legislative committee meets next fall on the formula.

The committee also discussed ideas developed after the March meeting for policy on ISD monitoring of MSRP program quality, including carving out a percentage of MSRP increase for ISDs to provide quality monitoring, training and support and program evaluation of all programs in the ISD district. The policy changes would:

- A. Require the ISD to develop and report on a written plan a plan that includes:
  - 1. The job description, name & qualifications of the early childhood specialist;
  - 2. Classroom observation visits;
  - 3. Objective administration of the PQA;
  - 4. Support for the classroom teacher in grant writing, goal development, and implementation of best practices;
  - 5. Professional development opportunities, which may include bringing all the MSRP teachers in the ISD together for data review (PQA, other student assessment data) and dialogue on effective strategies and best practice, on-site individualized coaching, and/or workshops.
- B. Require LEAs and competitive grant programs to sign on to the plan and assure that MSRP teachers participate.

It was noted by Lindy that the PQA and the early childhood standards of quality are valuable resources that have been underutilized in establishing and maintaining consistent high quality in programs throughout the state.

**Full Day Kindergarten:** There is talk that research does not support the long-term value of full day kindergarten, though other research supports its effectiveness though it depends upon what is taught and what outcomes are measured. In any case, parents are beginning to demand it. This increases pressure for classroom space which could push the preschools out. Discussion on what has the greatest impact—three year old preschool, full day or half day preschool, full or half day kindergarten—and in what combination. The legislative committee will like take a neutral stand on the issue. The committee also discussed next steps, including the development a white paper that includes MSRP and full day kindergarten, taking a high philosophical stance and fleshing out our ideas and set our platform for the department.

**VII. Official Committee Composition:** The people who attend this committee are not always those who have been appointed by MAISA regions. We have a responsibility to respond to our parent organization.

**VIII. Committee Meeting Attendance:** How do we deal with guests at committee meetings (ECIC, Brad, Department representatives)?

**IX. Other Items:** None

**X. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 12:15

**XI. Next Meeting:** Thursday, March 27, 2008, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.