

Kids Central Incorporated
Board of Directors Meeting
April 18, 2006

The Board of Directors of Kids Central Incorporated met on April 18, 2006 at the Kids Central Administration office. Donald Baker, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:55 a.m.

Board Members present: George Aichel, Jewell Askins, Donald Baker, Charles Hay, Jim O'Quinn, Rick Sutherland, Carl Mullins and Jason French

Staff present: Darrell Edwards, Lisa Barton, Chris Austin, Kim Addison, Sandra Willis, and Mary Collins

Minutes:

Donald Baker asked members of the Board if they had read the minutes of the last meeting and if anyone had any questions or corrections. George Aichel stated on page 2 under Appalachia Church, the terminology needed to be changed to "Presbytery" instead of Presbyterian.

Jim O'Quinn made a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting with the above correction. Charles Hay seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Finance Report:

Lisa Barton stated that we have received our official letter stating we will receive a 1% decrease in funding for the 2006-2007 fiscal year. We are ten months into our fiscal year and have spent 82% of our Head Start funds and 85.5% of our Early Head Start funds.

The part-year centers will end this week. We still need \$109,000 worth of in-kind for this year. Lisa stated that any ideas the Board might have to help obtain more in-kind would be gladly accepted.

Because we have asked for a waiver for this year's in-kind, we have been told by Philadelphia that we must meet our in-kind requirements next year.

Policy Council Report:

Jason French gave the Policy Council Report. He stated that the Policy Council dismissed some members for excessive absenteeism, and added one new member. The Family Advocate proposal was passed, as was changing the titles of the Early Head Start Teacher to Lead Teacher and the Early Head Start Classroom Assistant to Teacher. The proposal to change the full-year substitutes to part-year and hire one part-year substitute was passed. The Policy Council members passed a recommendation to increase the Customer Services Representative's pay by \$2.00 per hour. The discretionary days policy was approved as written.

Clinchco Center:

Chris Austin reported that the Clinchco center opened today with children attending.

Family Advocate Proposal:

Darrell Edwards stated that the information concerning the Family Advocate Division was given to the Board members at last month's meeting. Darrell met with the Family Services staff and the management team and discussed the need for this change. We perceived no problems with this change.

The Family Services Component emerged from a grant given to fund the creation of the component. Once the initial start up grant money was given, the funds to continue the component were then automatically incorporated into the yearly grant.

In this proposal, there would be a Health Services Assistant position created to help with the health portion.

Children's records are monitored four times per year by current staff. The Family Service Workers helped with recruitment and this can be absorbed through existing staff. Mileage reimbursement will be a huge savings for the agency due to the fact that we will not be paying mileage for seven Family Service Workers and four employees will be absorbed into existing education positions. All Family Service Workers may apply for all positions opened. Our goal is to not lose any services to the children and families.

Charles Hay asked who would be performing the duties that the Family Service Workers currently have. Darrell stated that other staff is already performing some of the duties. Jewell Askins asked who would conduct the home visits. Darrell stated the Teachers and Family Advocates will do home visits when necessary. The Teacher and Classroom Assistant will be the first line of defense for the families, and from here it go through the proper channels. The time of receiving the needed services should be cut from what it is currently.

Jim O'Quinn asked what the ratio would be of families to Family Advocates. Darrell replied, one Family Advocate to approximately 120 children.

Kim Addison added that when she began her position as Education Director, the Teacher did not really know what the Family Service Workers were doing. The Teachers can follow up on issues and needs of the children and should know what is happening with the children and families because they see and talk to the parents on a routine basis. Kim states that in order to completely serve a child and his/her family, all components need to work together.

Chris Austin stated that Myrlene O'quin is the Health Services Manager and is the Health Coordinator. Health is a major component of Family Services and this is one reason a Health Services Assistant position was created to help her.

In the past, Darrell stated, components of this agency were fragmented. One group did not want the other groups to know what they were doing, they looked out for themselves. He is trying to avoid this and pull this agency as a whole. The Family Services component is a luxury and the services and duties provided can be absorbed through other staff. Everyone can conduct recruitment, which is an important part of this program and has been handled by Family Services Workers in the past.

Jewell Askins stated that recruitment is hard to do from an office. Jim O'Quinn stated that enrollment would drop without the outside recruitment efforts as done in the past.

Darrell stated that if the Board did not approve the Family Advocate Division, where would the funds come from to pay the Family Service Workers, because the funds are not in the budget for next year.

Jodi Spriggs stated that when her child was in this program, it was hard to have adequate communication when you had to go through several people to get something accomplished. With the Family Advocate, you will have one person to deal with instead of two or three. The services should be received faster. She feels that Darrell is trying to stop the delay of delivery of services to the families.

Jewell Askins stated she fears the number of home visits and contact with the families will diminish with this new division. Jim O'Quinn stated we are trying to work a new program and do not know if it will work. Jewell stated that just in her personal contacts with people who live in the area, there are still a lot of eligible children we are not serving. The children are here; we are just not reaching them.

Donald Baker states he is hearing a lot of concerns over the Family Advocate proposal. He wants to hear the questions and concerns because if funds are not available for the Family Service Workers next year, there is a problem. This program in the past has looked after its own components and we need to look at this agency as one. He states that it seems the Family Service Workers have not been doing what they should have been in the past.

George Aichel asked how the operation would be streamlined. Darrell said by asking what is the best scenario. With the Family Advocates, services will get solutions to the problem in motion immediately. The Teachers should have been doing this in the past, but have not because they thought the Family Service Workers were handling the problems.

Jodi Spriggs stated that the Teachers have been wonderful to work with but had parent had the opportunity to address issue to them instead of them having to come ask for help, she believes parents would open up more.

Jewell Askins asked Kim Addison how she felt with giving these duties to the Teachers. Kim stated that staffings are conducted on every child in the program. This year, staffings have been held twice and next year they will be held three times. The Family Advocate will follow up on any findings noted during these staffings. This is not an unrealistic caseload. While checking files in the centers, Kim has noted that the Teachers are working with the files more than the Family Service Workers now.

Jim O'Quinn asked if Darrell thought services to the families would fall through the cracks with a caseload of one to 120. Darrell stated the team will consists of two Family Service Advocates, three Health personnel, three Supervisors and one Disabilities Coordinator. With these people as a team no services should fall within the cracks. And with the staffings being held in the centers with staff members, any problems will be noted and followed up immediately.

Jim O'Quinn asked how much cost savings this proposal will have on the agency. Darrell stated that going with Family Advocates would save the agency over \$100,000. This agency has already cut Administration as much as it can to save money and there is no other choice but this proposal to save money.

A comment was made regarding our budget being set by our enrollment. This is true, however, our enrollment is not going to increase. We can only serve 404 children. An increase to the enrollment will have to be approved and due to the cut in enrollment last year, we will not be approved for an increase in enrollment for a while.

Jewell Askins stated she felt that the agency had the luxury of having the Family Service Workers and did not utilize it the way it should have. Darrell said the caseloads were too small and this year he placed them in the centers to work.

Darrell stated that through file monitoring, computer generated reports, and client contact sheets showing referrals and the follow-up, our checks and balances of this system should be good.

Donald Baker stated that money has been wasted in the past and staff fragmented themselves into their own departments and some history of problems relate to the Family Service Workers not doing their jobs. He is not sure this proposal will work. Jim O'Quinn stated he feels comfortable with this change. Donald Baker said he sees this agency operating much better in the last two to three years than in the past and we are heading in a better direction.

Charles Hay asked Darrell how he made the determination of where to make the cuts for the budget. Darrell stated he had no pre-determined idea. With the price of gas increasing tremendously, the budget has taken a hard hit that was not expected. We need to save money everywhere. This year, staff will not receive a raise, not even a cost of living increase. With the savings of mileage for the current seven Family Service Workers and the positions being absorbed throughout the agency, he felt this was a good choice.

George Aichel asked how the Teachers feel about this proposal. Darrell stated that the Family Service Workers understand and agreed during the meeting with them. Kim Addison said we have not had a chance to talk with the Teachers; however, she did talk with Tammy Mullins, a current Education Specialist who was one of our previous Teachers. She said Tammy feels this proposal will work.

Jim O'Quinn made a motion to approve the addition of the Family Advocate Division and eliminating the Family Service Workers positions. Jewell Askins seconded the motion. Charles Hay voted nay. Motion carried.

Board Members:

Shannon Scott presented the nominations of Board Officers and Board Members for the 2006 – 2007 fiscal year at last months meeting. Shannon is not present at today's meeting so Darrell asked that we take this business up at next month's meeting. Donald Baker stated we need new members by September and if anyone had any recommendations to bring them to the Board.

Community and Family Partnership Written Plans:

Members of the Board were given the Family and Community Partnership Written Plans at the last two previous meetings to review. Chris stated that he would like the Board to act on these plans at today's meeting. Jim O'Quinn made a motion to approve the Community and Family Partnership Written Plans. Carl Mullins seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Part-Year Substitutes:

Chris presented a proposal to the Board members to add one new part-year substitute position and change the two current full-year substitute positions to part-year. These substitutes will work five days per week in the classrooms.

George Aichel made a motion to approve the hire of one new part-year substitute and changing the two full-year substitutes to part-year. Rick Sutherland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Change of Titles for Early Head Start Teacher and Classroom Assistant:

Currently our job descriptions list Early Head Start staff as Teachers and Classroom Assistants. In Early Head Start, one adult is responsible for four children. This proposal is to change the title of the Early Head Start Teacher to Early Head Start Lead Teacher and the Early Head Start Classroom Assistant to Early Head Start Teacher. The duties of the job descriptions will remain the same.

Jewell Askins made a motion to change the title of Early Head Start Teacher to Early Head Start Lead Teacher and the title of Early Head Start Classroom Assistant to Early Head Start Teacher. Rick Sutherland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ELAP Observation Tool:

During our review, concern was raised regarding the Denver II observation tool currently being used. The Denver II is vague and Carrie Burke and Kim Addison researched other options and found that the ELAP (Early Learning Accomplishment Profile) a much better option. The ELAP is a much more extensive tool than the Denver II. This will be used for Early Head Start and Kim and Carrie will conduct observations three times per year.

Jewell Askins made a motion to replace the Denver II with the ELAP (Early Learning Accomplishment Profile) Observation Tool. Carl Mullins seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discretionary Days:

Currently, after new hires complete their probationary period, they receive their sick leave and vacation time to use. In the past, this has presented a problem due to some employees working long enough to get their time, using all their leave and then leaving the agency. This proposal is to change the length of time for new hire in receiving their vacation and sick leave. It is proposed that new employees receive their sick leave and vacation after six months of service with the agency.

Donald Baker stated that at a minimum, new hires should have to work ninety (90) days before receiving their leave benefits. Jewell Askins stated she believes sick leave should be given at ninety (90) days.

George Aichel made a motion to change the current Discretionary Days policy to state that new hires will receive their sick leave benefits after ninety days of service and will receive their vacation time after one hundred eighty days of service. Jim O'Quinn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Transportation for Full-Year Centers:

Chris Austin is proposing to eliminate transportation to the full-year centers (Haysi, Esserville, Nita Bond Center, and Appalachia I) beginning the 2006-2007 year. In our grant, it is stated that these four centers are to operate 10 hours per day, five days per week, two hundred twenty five days per year. In order for a child to be placed in these four centers, the parents must be working or attending school and have no caregiver at home. If parents are working or attending school, they should be able to drop their child off at the center on their way and pick them up on their way home.

For children currently being served in the full-year centers that do not meet the criteria, we will make arrangements to move the child into a part-year center in close proximity to the center they are currently attending.

Kim Addison stated that there is a major need for childcare in our area. There are working parents that need this service and we should be providing the service to them.

George Aichel made a motion to eliminate transportation for the full-year centers (Haysi, Esserville, Nita Bond Center and Appalachia I) beginning the 2006-2007 year. Rick Sutherland seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Increase in Pay for the Customer Service Representative:

Darrell Edwards presented a proposal to the Board to approve a recommendation of a \$2.00 per hour increase for the Customer Service Representative. He states that due to the elimination of the MIS Service Coordinator position, the CSR has taken on many duties of that position and these duties are not in the CSR job description.

Charles Hay stated that Darrell just requested the Board eliminate the Family Service department to decrease the budget approximately \$100,000 and he did not think it was right to turn around and ask for a pay increase for a staff member.

George Aichel made a motion to increase the Customer Service Representative's pay by \$2.00 per hour due to the increase in job duties. The motion died due to the lack of a second.

Carolyn Pierce:

Darrell made the announcement about the passing of Carolyn Pierce. Carolyn passed away approximately two weeks ago. She will be sadly missed. We relied on her insight for this program and she was very knowledgeable in what she did.

Next Meeting:

The next Board of Director's meeting will be held May 16, 2006 at 11:00 a.m. at the Kids Central Administration office.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Ed Hutchinson, Secretary