



IEIC Region 8 Meeting Minutes
Pizza Ranch Slayton, MN
2/25/2025
12:00 – 2:00 pm

Members Present: Kelly Konechne, Channing VanOverbeke, Michelle Niehus, Kristin Deacon, Jackie Heibert, Payton Braun, Sarah Mok, Shelley Krueger, Lindy Kaden, Ramy Vandendriesse, Erin Behnke, Sara Zins, Rachel Klein, Hollie Pater, Karen DeBoer, Amber Groen, Sally Gniffke, Heather Rinke, Nancy Syltie, Katie Rigge, Cody Rofshus, Melinda Ferry

1. Agenda Approval: **M- Braun/S- DeBoer /P- All in Favor.**
2. Minutes Approval from 12/02/2024: **M- Pater/S- Braun /P- All in Favor with Changes: Update Date from Minutes and Change Lindy Prescott to Lindy Kaden.**

3. Member Introductions and Sharing: Welcome to the new members! We appreciate everyone taking the time to attend and spreading the word about HMG. A couple new faces this time.

4. State Updates:

December (MOM) 2024- Tracy Hafeman of Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota presented to our group about programs and services they offer for families in MN. They have programs for all ages, but shared mainly what they offer for Prenatal through Age 5. There are meetups, facebook groups, family connectors who help with services/IEP/etc, emergency lines, and various materials they distribute. They also have a 3/21 program to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day where they send books and materials to classrooms to discuss inclusion and differences. You can sign up for those packages at DSAMN.ORG. We also continued the discussion on Marijuana usage. There was an information sheet sent out in early January from Dept of Health/WIC. I will send out that document after our quarterly meeting.

January (MOM) 2025- We mainly talked about the changes and potential changes happening federally regarding The Educational Choice for Children Act and Undocumented Families and how those will affect our children and programs. We discussed how we can share our HMG programming safely without unintentionally harming families that are undocumented. There is the MNAFEE.ORG Annual Conference being held in April around the St. Cloud area. HMG will be hosting a booth. We also discussed the importance of digital advertising/marketing and how we can possibly work together to pool resources. It's an ongoing request we'd like to see, especially in rural MN.

February (MOM) 2025- Rescheduled to Tuesday, March 4 at 8:30am.

5. Guest Speakers:

- a. Jamie Sorgatz, Disability and Mental Health Coordinator and Nancy Syltie, Education Coordinator for UCAP Head Start spoke about services available to families and what that looks like. They serve 9 counties in SW MN. Services are available based on qualifiers such as income, foster care, SSDI, need, etc. It is no cost to the participant. Head Start is a Federally funded program serving over 40 Million children since 1965. They have many services available including ½ day, Full Day, Center and Homebased services. The presentation will be sent out to the members.

We also discussed the referral process and how we can refer between, but also how to close the loop in the release of information. This topic continues to come up and has caused concern on making sure procedures are followed, but that the referring partner knows a connection has been made. We'd like to work together to help each other get those release forms signed when needed based on the relationships existing agencies/service providers have with the families. Konechne will bring this topic up to Cat at Meeting of the Minds.

- b. Open Discussion- No Discussion brought up.

Old Business:

6. Members: We have good representation from each county and agency. We are always looking for anyone who would like to join our group though. Top areas needed are community members, service providers, and Lower Sioux tribal leaders. If anyone has direct contacts, please make a warm introduction with Konechne as the facilitator and she'll reach out.

7. Equity Audit- Tabled until further instructions from Cat Tamminga. This will be used to help our group for next fiscal year and moving forward.

8. Action Items In Progress-

- a. Digital Marketing- This campaign is currently in progress. We are about half way through a 2.5 month campaign. 15 second videos were shown at the meeting. These were utilized from another region to save on costs to produce a new video. In general people need to see the ad 7 times to make a lasting impression per The Daily Globe contact manager we are working with. There was great feedback from the analytics and it looks to be on trend. We have both a Spanish commercial and an English commercial.
- b. Community Transit Ads- B&K Designs was contracted to produce the decals to place on 24+ buses in the 9 county region. The decal has the logo, website, phone number, and QR code. UCAP has been given the decals and will install them on each of the buses. We also plan on marketing inside the buses on the televisions. Konechne and Braun are working on putting together some ideas to

share with UCAP for that campaign. We'll include things like iSpy, Word Searches, Hidden Pictures, etc.

- c. Radio Ads- These continue to run 1-2x a day on KLOH and KISD. The contract is for 1 year through August 2025. No one on membership has heard them first hand. It was also discussed if we could reallocate some of the Transit Bus ad money to a Spanish Radio Station ad. Konechne will reach out and check on pricing.
- d. Think Small- This is a program our IEIC region8 partnered with. The text code is "HMG" which is text to a number along with a birthday of your child age 0-5. Based on the age, a text is sent out 3x a week. Every age 0-5 is sent a different text. We as a group have the ability to send out additional texts if we want. Ideas include sending out reminders for Preschool Screening, Follow Along Program, etc. We can work together to come up with additional ideas once we get word out about the code. Brochures come in 3 languages and will be sent out to members. Please share this resource out as much as possible so we can start to utilize the additional text opportunities as a group.
- e. ECFE InReach- A goal we included in our work plan is to reach out to ECFE's in the area and present about the HMG program and milestones. This works well with the Child Find goals Pater works on as well. Unfortunately the email sent out with the referral tracking request to ECSE teachers did not get a good response for the ECFE contact information for each district. We'll continue asking to get updated information on that as this is an ongoing project.
- f. Kids First Conference- Konechne will be attending on behalf of the IEIC with a HMG Booth. We are tag teaming with Region 6. This is held at Jackpot Junction and there are over 300 attendees. Materials were received from the State so they did not come out of our budget, but will be handed out to attendees.
- g. International Festival- This is held in July. As a group we discussed attendance, who can work, concerns regarding undocumented attendees, and if we want to continue having a booth. It was decided to still provide materials at the SMOC/Public Health booth, but to take a year off with our booth. **M- DeBoer/S-Ferry /P- All in Favor.**

9. Changes to Operating Procedures: We voted at the December meeting for reimbursement and mileage to members who are not compensated as part of their work hours for attending meetings. \$100/meeting, mileage, and daycare stipend as needed. This is consistent with what we offer parents for a stipend and reimbursement. We also updated some meeting date options for when the calendar falls differently than typical.

*Anyone who needs reimbursement can fill out the forms and the Coop will send reimbursement.

New Business:

10. Current Budget- Our budget for the 24/25 FY is \$31,829.26. We have spent \$14,682.40 to date. We still have plenty left in our budget for the remaining projects and will likely have a carryover. Konechne will discuss if we are able to carry funds over at the next Meeting of the Minds. Everyone should think of a few projects we can have ready if we need to

spend down our funds before fiscal year end. A few ideas mentioned were extending the digital ads and spanish radio.

11. Material Orders: We ran into an issue with materials being outdated so to avoid that in the future we'll try to order what we need for that next 6 month period. We'll be putting together another order in March/April to be distributed at our April meeting.

12. Referral Tracking was discussed. There was a 100% return rate. Overall it looks like referrals have really increased from Clinics/Hospitals, but the overall number of referrals has stayed consistent from last year. Eligibles are down roughly 25% for 0-2 and 20% for 3-5. ECSE teachers in attendance at the meeting confirmed this "feels" correct based on their caseloads. This data will be tracked yearly and we'll have more analytics to compare after a few years. The referral spreadsheet collects the number of referrals, how many are in progress, how many are eligible, where the referral came from, and how the referral heard about HMG.

13. Ideas for Next Year's Workplan: We had 3 breakout groups to discuss ideas for next year. We'll continue to narrow this down and come up with areas of concentration for the next meeting so that our committee can work together for FY 25/26 workplan. A few ideas included: concentrating on childcare providers, ECFE presentations, Potty Training "Training", Preschool Screenings, Concentrating on self help skills/milestones for parents and providers, Including ideas for the Karen and Somali groups, Providing a Native American Training.

Next Meeting is April 29, 2025 at Slayton Pizza Ranch from 12-2pm. **This will be in person only to best plan for our next years work plan.**

Adjourn: **M- Braun /S- Pater /P- All in Favor.**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Konechne, Facilitator