



Montcalm County

Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative

Agenda

2/5/25

11:30am - 1:30pm

Meeting in Person at MAISD 621 New St Stanton

- I. Call to order:
- II. Welcome & Introductions:
- III. Public Comment:
- IV. February Agenda Approval:
- V. December Meeting Minutes Approval:
- VI. Director Report: [Brains Are Built!](#) Cari O'Connor
- VII. New Business:
 - A. Highlight Presentation: Montcalm County 211
 - B. Eight CAP Supports & Services
- VIII. Old Business:
 - A. Dolly Parton Imagination Library update: Mindy Train
 - B. Early On Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC): Cindy DeYoung
 - C. Talking is Teaching Update: Monique Cooper
- IX. Committee Reports:
 - A. Executive & Communication: Cari O'Connor
 - B. Early Care & Education: Mindy Train
 - C. Family Wellness: Karen Marsman
 - D. Family Leadership: Monique Cooper
- X. Roundtable Updates
- XI. Principals of Collaboration Survey
- XII. Adjournment

Next Meeting Date *June 4, 2025* 11:30 am – 1:30 pm

Location 621 New St Stanton MI 48888

Advance health equities.

Early Childhood services meet high standards of quality.

Children prenatal to age five and their families thrive.

Visit our website for the most updated calendar information at www.GreatStartMontcalm.org



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Minutes

12/4/24

I. Call to order:

Jen Peterman called the meeting to order at 11:35 am

II. Welcome & Introductions:

Present: Janel Boulis, Elizabeth Buskirk, Monique Cooper, Cindy DeYoung, Emily Dowd, Jessica Higley, Sue Kearney, Flora Ma, Anita McIntyre, Lillie McNeil, Cari O'Connor, Jennifer Peterman, Jody Snyder, Alison Stout, Drew Train, Mindy Train, Joanna Urban, Cassie House, Jessica Bailey

III. Public Comment:

There was no public comment

IV. December Agenda Approval:

A motion was made by Emily Dowd and supported by Lillie McNeil to approve the agenda of the December 4, 2024, as presented. Motion was carried.

V. October Meeting Minutes Approval:

A motion was made by Drew Train and supported by Sue Kearney to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2024, as presented. Motion was carried.

VI. Director Report: Cari O'Connor

2024-2025 Preschool recruitment continues and applications are being processed and distributed as they come in! We have processed approximately 900+ applications and this number is lower than at this time last year. We appreciate any help you can provide!

MAISD submitted GSRP Allocation request for 2024-2025. Operating a total of 26 classrooms this school year. Greenville and Tri County, & Huntley's Clubhouse are implementing the pilot for 5 day a week 36-week programming option. Huntley's site in Lakeview will not be opening this year.

Michigan Educator Workforce Initiative: CDA, Bachelors, and potentially Masters Degree support is available to staff who are working in/at any level of Early Childhood and or education. Please have anyone that you are connected with email me directly if they would like to be considered for this pilot.

32P and 32p6 EOY reports are completed and submitted to Mi Leap. We have enough carry over to ensure that we can continue to meet our obligations with our Welcome Baby! Funding. MCGSC uses \$28,000 to support the Welcome Baby! Program in Montcalm. Legislated restrictions create barriers so we have to plan for carry over in order to keep the program whole. At this time, due to budget restraints this is the only early childhood programming we are able to fund at this time.

MAISA Video Update: Spoke with Kyle. Video series is still in progress. Looking at release dates in Jan/Feb. Also working with PBIS as potentially this series will be broadcasted as it aligns with PBIS and their Early Childhood priorities.

MAISA Early Childhood Summitt: MAISA ECAN planned and implemented an Early Childhood Summit to lift up advocacy needs and built a shared understanding of ISDs

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leadership role in the local Early Childhood System. ECAN is in the process of creating tools that will help with the advocacy of the following Early Childhood Agenda for the State of MI:

- Support the PreK for All Action Plan: fund resources needed to support expansion of GSRP and build Child Care/HeadStart partnership opportunities
- Section 32d/32d (8) (c)(i) - Maintaining expansion funding GSRP
- Section 54d - Early On Single tier system changes to support "All means ALL"
- Section 32p - Great Start Collaborative and Family Coalition, Home Visiting, & Literacy: Fund GSC's in a way that sustains and build local systems to support families

MAISD EOY Early Childhood Report: MCGSC Directo presented at the MAISD board meeting and November Superintendent meetings.

Shout outs, thank yous, & Recognition:

- Video participants; especially Alpha for letting us come and visit!
- Greenville Area Community Foundation for their ongoing commitment to DPIL sustainable funding!
- Family Liaisons: the work that we accomplish is exciting and completing our EOY report really lifts their commitment to this work up!

VII. New Business:

A. Highlight Presentation: DHHS Universal Caseload

Montcalm/Ionia Counties DHHS are combining case loads. There will be one call number that will be connected to an call specialist that will assists the call further. 888-642-7434 or Michigan.gov/mibridges

B. Christmas Family Support resources: Jessica Higley DHHS

Toys for Tots – no income – deadline 12/6

Angel Tree- salvation army

Shop with a hero through the schools/sheriffs department

Greenville Lions Club

Kent County Santa Claus Girls Club

Community Christmas shopping in Coral 12/7

Operation good cheer – just for foster kids

DHHS gets a few donations to help families out in a bind

C. Maternal Infant Health Program Data Sharing: Jennifer Peterman Corewell Health

Presentation attached

VIII. Old Business:

A. Dolly Parton Imagination Library update: Mindy Train

Current number enrolled - 1,763

69 Early Head Start Children are all enrolled, thanks to EightCAP for sponsoring them.

The current program cost is \$2.25 per child per month. To accommodate the significant increases in postage, the new program cost will be \$2.65. Starting January 1st

B. Early On Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC): Cindy DeYoung

Update attached

C. Conscious Discipline Snapshot Tutorial: Lillie McNeil & Flora Yan Ma

Presentation attached

IX. Committee Reports:

A. Executive & Communication: Jennifer Peterman

Reviewed GSRP enrollment and classroom update, 32p and 32p6 budget, family engagement literacy hub and talking is teaching updates

B. Early Care & Education: Mindy Train

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Working on putting together a Jumpstart to Kindergarten event with a few local school districts. Sending out invites in January to district principals.

Snowy Stories event in partnership with Flat River Community Library is on February 7th from 10 am – 11 am.

C. Family Wellness: Karen Marsman

Preparing for a few upcoming events – cupcakes, coffee and cream, a breastfeeding event, meal prep/gardening, and working on a magazine around grief.

D. Family Leadership: Monique Cooper

November 11th Family Coalition was around How to Handle Bad Behaviors, great turn out and December 9th is our Holiday event with families, various organizations will be present providing crafts and games, pictures with Santa.

X. Roundtable Updates

- Alison Stout – MMDHD magnetics available with QR code to sign up for monthly newsletters, Fly/COVID clinics available, closed December 24th – January 1st
- Lillie McNeil- Infant/toddler caseloads, working with providers on goals meeting virtually
- Monique Cooper- Talking is Teaching resource catalog available
- Emily Dowd- Young teens in Lakeview collecting toiletry items, putting together themed packs and donations to lakeview schools
- Sue Kearney- 3rd grade classes will be done by Christmas break as well as half of 2nd graders, received 2 substantial donations, one will be an annual donation to help support a prevention educator their salary and mileage. Family Fun Day is May 17th
- Jody Snyder- Feed the need 1200 bags, senior bags 200, period project kids to all Ionia/Montcalm schools

XI. Principals of Collaboration Survey

Any questions or comments about DHHS information presented

- Great information and will share with families

Any questions or comments about MIHP information presented

- Great information, love all the services that are provided

Do you or your organization need Talking is Teaching Materials

- Flora/Lillie gain access to printable materials

Are you interested in accessing the online self-paced conscious discipline training resources

- For foster parents and possibly CPS parents
- Group viewing for the course
- Yes, connect with Jenniffer Peterman

XII. Adjournment

Adjourned at 1:25 pm

Next Meeting Date February 5, 2025 11:30 am – 1:30 pm

Location 621 New St Stanton MI 48888

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MAISD Early On LICC Report: February 5, 2025

REFER today for any infant or toddler you have concerns about! ANYONE can refer.

Go to: www.1800Earlyon.org or call 1-800-EarlyOn

Comparison Referral Data

	2017-18 Referrals	2018-19 Referrals	2019-20 Referrals	2020-21 Referrals	2021-22 Referrals	2022-2023 Referrals	2023-2024 Referrals	2024-2025 Referrals
July	16	30	35	20	28	9	23	21
August	27	40	33	16	26	38	28	28
September	24	13	25	24	30	27	18	30
October	17	24	19	32	24	19	27	26
November	12	17	12	11	34	33	21	25
December	8	17	21	18	14	20	18	23
January	15	22	35	30	32	26	33	32*
February	29	35	34	23	28	23	32	
March	26	26	25	25	38	29	28	
April	31	34	14	31	26	28	28	
May	17	32	10	22	24	27	27	
June	24	25	16	24	33	23	22	
TOTAL	229	315	279	266	337	302	305	

*As of January 28, 2025

As of January 28, 2025 Montcalm Area ISD Early On has:

- 29 Children in Referral
- 145 Children enrolled and receiving Early On Services.
- 32 of 145 (22%) students receiving Early On are ALSO receiving special education services (Michigan Mandated Special Education MMSE).

Outreach and Early On Video: [Early On Video Link](#)

Professional Development:

Professional development for the 24-25 school year will focus on learning about and implementing Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) practices in the birth to three populations and using data driven processes to make decisions regarding eligibility, instruction and service times.

On January 20, we introduced a number of mid-tech options for Alternative and Augmentative Communication to work with Early On families

Playgroups:

Come to playgroups! Spread the word with the flier below.

Check us out on Social Media



Montcalm Co. Playgroup

Private group



MAISD Early On

Follow us on Social Media to learn how to make a referral and get information about your child's development.

- Need more developmental wheels, Early On pamphlets or other materials? Email Elizabeth Buskirk at ebuskirk@maisd.com
- Interested in having an Early On staff member come speak to your organization? Email Cindy DeYoung at cdeyoung@maisd.com



2024-2025 FREE Playgroup Opportunity in Montcalm County for parents & children!



Any family with children from ages birth thru 4 years old living in Montcalm Area Intermediate School District is welcome to attend.

Registration is preferred prior to attending. Call (616) 225-6146 to register or for more information.

Highlights

- *Try new activities with your child that will stimulate your child's development!
- *Learn songs and read books (receive a copy of each book to keep)
- *Interact with other parents and children!
- *Learn strategies to use at home and have access to Early Childhood professionals to ask questions.

Book of the Month			
September - Giraffe's Can't Dance October - Little Blue Truck November - Little Owl's Day December - Please Mr. Panda January - Snowball Soup		February - The Kissing Hand March - Click Clack Moo April - Rooster's Off to See the World May - Moo Dog	
The KICKOFF event this year will be at Anderson & Girls Orchard (2985 N Sheridan Rd, Stanton, MI 48888) Time: 10:00am-11:30am Date: September 19 th All families are welcomed to come!			
Tri County Middle School 21350 Kendaville Rd Howard City, MI 49329 Tuesday Morning 9:30am - 11:00am October - 1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 29 th November - 5 th , 19 th December - 3 rd , 10 th , 17 th January - 14 th , 21 st , 28 th February - 11 th , 18 th , 25 th March - 4 th , 11 th , 18 th April - 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th May - 6 th , 13 th		Montabella Elementary 1456 North County Line Rd Blanchard, MI 49310 Wednesday Morning 9:30am - 11:00am October - 2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 30 th November - 6 th , 20 th December - 4 th , 11 th , 18 th January - 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th February - 12 th , 19 th , 26 th March - 5 th , 12 th , 19 th April - 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th May - 7 th , 14 th	
Montcalm Area Career Center 1550 W Sidney Rd Sidney, MI 48885 Wednesday Morning 9:30am - 11:00am October - 2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 30 th November - 6 th , 20 th December - 4 th , 11 th , 18 th January - 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th February - 12 th , 19 th , 26 th March - 5 th , 12 th , 19 th April - 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th May - 7 th , 14 th		Mt Calvary Church 908 W Oak St Greenville, MI 48838 Thursday Morning 9:30am - 11:00am October - 3 rd , 10 th , 17 th , 31 st November - 7 th , 21 st December - 5 th , 12 th , 19 th January - 16 th , 23 rd , 30 th February - 13 th , 20 th , 27 th March - 6 th , 13 th , 20 th April - 10 th , 17 th , 24 th May - 1 st , 8 th , 15 th	
Evening Playgroup at Mt. Calvary Church 908 W Oak St Greenville, MI 48838 5:30pm-6:30pm		October 17 November 7 December 12	January 23 February 20 March 13 April 17 May 15



Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative Meeting Schedule 2024-2025

Montcalm County GSC Board Meetings (at the Montcalm Area Intermediate School District, Stanton):

Contact person: [Cari O'Connor](#)

- **October 2, 2024**, from 11:30-1:30 pm
- **December 4, 2024**, from 11:30-1:30 pm
- **February 5, 2025**, from 11:30-1:30 pm
- **June 4, 2025**, from 11:30-1:30 pm
- **August 6, 2025**, from 11:30-1:30 pm

Montcalm County GSC Committee Meetings:

Executive & Communications Committee (virtual through Zoom):

Contact person: [Cari O'Connor](#)

- **November 13, 2024**, from 11:30-1:00 pm
- **May 7, 2025**, from 11:30-1:00 pm
- **September 3, 2025**, from 11:30-1:00 pm

Family Leadership Committee - Family Coalition Meetings (meetings will be located at the Montcalm Area Career Center, 1550 W Sidney Rd, Sidney, dinner, and childcare provided)

Contact person: **Monique Cooper**

- **September 9, 2024**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – Love Languages
- **October 14, 2024**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – Guiding Behaviors
- **November 11, 2024**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – How to Handle Bad Behavior
- **December 9, 2024**, from 5:30-7:00 pm - Holiday Celebration with Santa
- **January 13, 2025**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – Intro to S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)
- **February 10, 2025**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – Getting Children to Eat
- **March 10, 2025**, from 5:30-7:00 pm - Family Awareness Month, Special Event for the Whole Family
- **April 14, 2025**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – Engaging Activities with Children
- **May 12, 2025**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – Creating Family Traditions
- **June 9, 2025**, from 5:30-7:00 pm – Summer Kick Off- Carson City Park and Splash Pad

Montcalm County GSC Committee Meetings:

Family Wellness Committee (at the Montcalm Area Intermediate School District, Stanton):

Contact person: **Monique Cooper**

- **October 2, 2024**, from 1:30-2:30 pm
- **December 4, 2024**, from 1:30-2:30 pm
- **February 5, 2025**, from 1:30-2:30 pm
- **April 2, 2025**, from 1:30-2:30 pm
- **June 4, 2025**, from 1:30-2:30 pm
- **August 6, 2025**, from 1:30-2:30 pm

Early Care & Education Committee (at the Montcalm Transition Center, Stanton):

Contact person: **Mindy Train**

- **October 9, 2024**, from 9:00-10:00 am
- **December 4, 2024**, from 9:30-10:30am
- **February 5, 2025**, from 9:30-10:30am
- **June 4, 2025**, from 9:30-10:30am
- **August 6, 2025**, from 9:30-10:30am

Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative Support Staff Contact Information

618 W Main St, Suite C

Stanton, MI 48888

Website: www.greatstartmontcalm.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/greatstartmontcalmcounty

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Drew Train
Family Liaison

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Mindy Train
Family Liaison

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Cari O'Connor
Director

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Childcare Resources

Financial Assistance & Information for Families

Federal and State Programs

Child care assistance programs are designed to make childcare more affordable for families, support children's early development, enable parents to work or pursue education, and promote economic stability and growth.

- **Child Development and Care (CDC) Program**

Michigan's CDC scholarships (subsidies) provide financial assistance to eligible, income constrained families by providing direct payments to childcare providers, reducing out-of-pocket costs.

- **Free/Low-Cost Preschool Programs**

These preschool programs provide early childhood education at little to no cost, ensuring children receive essential developmental and learning opportunities regardless of their family's financial situation.

Head Start and the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) are federally and state funded PreK programs for eligible 3- & 4-year-olds.

Assistance for Military Families

The federal government offers subsidies to members of the military and the Department of Defense.

Child Care Aware of America will provide more information on eligible programs and assistance.

Childcare Tax Opportunities

Tax credits are available to help lower the cost of your childcare. The resources provided here are intended as informational only and are not a substitute for professional tax advice.

- **Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit**

With this tax credit, you are able to itemize up to \$3,000 in childcare expenses per child (\$6,000 maximum).

Families can't use this tax credit and their FSA for the same expenses. For example, if a family with more than one child has already set aside the maximum of \$5,000 in their FSA, they can only claim \$1,000 toward the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit.

- **Earned Income Tax Credit**

The EITC is a tax credit available to low- to moderate-income wage earners. The credit can range from a few hundred to several thousand, depending upon how many children you have and what your filing status is.

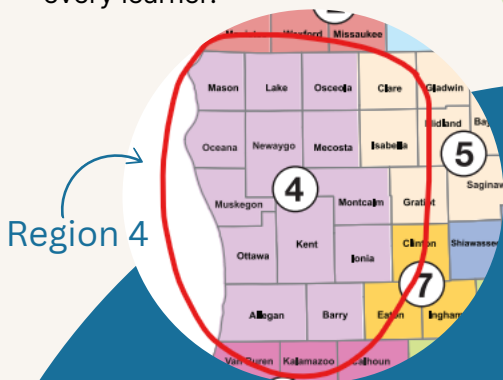
Scan QR Code for More Information

- The state's CDC subsidy program and how to apply
- Free/Low-Cost preschool and how to apply
- Childcare and earned income tax credit
- Childcare providers in your area that have open slots



MiFamily Engagement

Together, we are developing a system of support for educators and family-facing professionals to increase collaborative relationships among families, educators and providers that that increase the well-being, literacy and language development of every learner.



Check out our newsletter!



<https://secure.smor.e.com/n/3syh4p>

MiFamily Engagement Website

<https://www.michigan.gov/mileap/education-partnerships/family-partnerships>



OUR GOALS

- Identify and address needs across the region
- Support effective family engagement efforts linked to student achievement and school improvement
- Increase early literacy through family engagement
- Communication, collaboration and sustainability