

Bring up revolutionary ideas: No more verbal committee updates – written! – with verbal for important coming dates; 1-hour meetings!

January 19, 2016  
Advocacy Committee

Brie Oliver, Judy Edwards, Chelsea Hillman, Jaymie Sheldahl, Trina Filan, Mary Jane Standaert  
(via conference call)

- Jaymie – Citizens Advocacy group for Head Start – getting started. Pushing forward an early childhood agenda at a state policy level. Would like this group to help with, dovetail with that one? They need help getting ready to get out into the community and be effective advocates for their goals and having their needs met.
  - Chelsea – Yes, this is the group for that – early childhood and family advocacy. She just presented at a CCP training on how you advocate. MAC + ECC's around the state joining to push legislation affecting us all.
  - Roundtable discussion group to educate local legislators – it will happen this year. Time to start checking dates.
  - HMHB is moving back into this role, too. Advancing public policy – process to make this happen. Esp. in regard to post-partum depression and getting it recognized and covered by insurance, neonatal abstinence, maternal mortality and obesity...
  - Jaymie wants to figure out how to help the parents communicate their message and enthusiasm in ways that don't turn off legislators.
  - Training, collectively sorting through needs and prioritize
  - ~~MAC has an agenda for this year. See Montana Head Start Association's website~~
  - If Early Edge passes, Head Start (which deals with 3 and 4 year olds) will have to change its model to focus on early head start.
  - We might be able to achieve the biggest impact by working together on common issues.
  - **Goal is a train-the-trainer model. Do YouTube video of Chelsea's talk, post to website.**
- Mary Jane – Montana Advocates for Children – they have the same issues of focus as last year.
  - Early Edge (with some reservations)
  - Early Head Start (needs to be developed)
  - STARS to Quality child care funding
  - All the issues Judy brought up as important to HMHB
  - More
  - Since 2003 or so, MAC has been the group counted upon to bring all issues together; is that effective? To some extent. There are four statewide advocacy organizations...it's hard to narrow the focus to a few key issues.
- Legislators prefer a united front – how to do this?
  - Make a list of topics important to our various groups
  - Share with other ECCs/BBACs and see where we align.

- Need issues clarified and bills before them by October of this year – perhaps focus on issues that we can build upon year-over-year
- Add tab to ECC website – “Priority Issues for 2017”
- Invite Erin McGowan-Finchon to our next Advocacy Committee meeting – make sure we’re not working at cross-purposes at the legislative level. (Brie is working on this.) Her website: Montana Children’s Initiative ([mci4kids.org](http://mci4kids.org)). Ask her to attend our Feb 16, 10:30a.m. meeting
- Does HMHB have a role to play in coordinating advocacy? Sure. What does that look like? Coordinate with MAC, so we do not seem like we’re working at cross-purposes.
- Chelsea will ask the Governor’s office about whether they have an agenda yet for next year.

Goals for next time (Feb 16, 10:30, UWLCA):

- List of top-priority issues for the Legislature
- Look for overlap
- Talk to BBAC local councils about consolidating advocacy agendas (on Feb 9)