

**Minnesota West Community & Technical College
Child Development Program Advisory Committee Meeting
Prairie's Edge, Granite Falls**

April 24, 2013

Attending: Darcy Kleven, Lori Gunnink, Marge Knudson, Cathy Nelson-Messer, Gail Goltz, Sharon Rasmussen, Laine Rieger

Welcome and Thanks

Lunch

Review of 2012/2013:

- Majority of Child Dev. graduates are earning an A.S.
- Roughly half of A.S. students choose to articulate to SMSU
- Continued growth in non-traditional student numbers
- 41 total advisees, and of those, 21 are taking at least one on-campus class
- NOCTI administered in December, and will be again in May
- New promotional material and radio ads shared
- CDA – New version and Laine in process of becoming Professional Development Specialist

Discussion on above items:

Diploma students primarily work in child care centers or begin their own Family Child Care. The group was pleased to hear that there is recognition of the importance of education for both of these settings.

WCA, SMOC, and P-5 Directors expressed appreciation for the partnership and support offered to their staff, who are working on A.S. degrees. Laine expressed her appreciation for the level of work and dedication these educators display, and offered assistance to any potential students they may have.

The committee was very interested in the NOCTI results which were shared. Laine noted that areas for improvement include Diversity in the Classroom and Professionalism. Strengths are Physical Development, Guidance, Observation, and Documentation & Assessment. The latter was of special interest because this is a component that is crucial for documentation of progress. The importance of using a standardized assessment instrument for program improvement was stressed by the group.

There is a new version of the CDA starting in June, and there is continued interest because a CDA qualifies individuals to be home visitors and classroom assistants. Laine is in the process of being certified as a Professional Development Specialist and offered to work with staff to facilitate their journey.

Laine asked about perceived needs and Gail said the parent/family engagement is a relevant topic. Laine reminded the group of the fall class *Family & Community Relations* that has an objective of enhancing that partnership. Laine also invited participation in the summer on-line course *Special Needs*, and reminded the group that TEACH scholarships are available, and there is rumored Race to the Top funding for scholarships, as well. There appears to be a number of staff at each of the Head Start sites who would benefit from their A.S. or CDA.

Laine inquired if there are trends of which the program should be aware, especially in terms of Legislature possibly funding significantly more Early Childhood Education, such as preschool scholarships. Heartland is already participating in a pilot program, and there is a significant financial benefit resulting in more staff. The committee discussed the potential for increased staff need and consequent increased educational needs.

Laine thanked the group on behalf of the program and the college.