

Prior to the next meeting each member of the team needs to answer the following:

“ We now have a Family Enrichment Center, as you walk in, what do you experience?” (Who greets you? What does it look like? Why did you come? How does it feel? Etc. etc.) Red asked everyone to send their “homework” to Jim prior to the next meeting and he would compile a summarized draft vision.

**Family Enrichment Minutes
June 13, 2007**

Present: Red Petrovs, Jan Stephens, Melissa Kurtz, Clo Barnett, Mike Hackett, Angie Moon de Avila, Tim Johnson, Jeff Lukich, Ray Beck, Monica Knight, Karen Seabaugh, Staff: Jim Geiser

Red opened the meeting with introductions and then gave a review of the progress of the group. He reported that at our last meeting we came to a general consensus as to how this “enrichment center” would work. However, there was still a need for much clarification. There was agreement that our two indicators would be 1. Every child reading on grade level by the end of third grade. 2. All adult with a job.

We need to be able to answer the question, “What will be different about what we are proposing as compared to what currently exists?” An immediate response to that question was that the group is proposing a collaboration of service providers working toward a common vision rather than a collection of service providers operating independently.

Red mentioned that our plan for today was to brainstorm some ideas as outlined in the agenda. The first item to discuss was **“Brainstorm strategies to bring the community and agency leaders to look at the solutions on a larger community scale rather than on an agency specific scale. Address the serious issue of fragmentation of services”**.

Some responses included:

1. Invite Toni Pickett (principal at Fourth Street) to join the group.
2. Provide a leadership conference/retreat at two levels. First with the major community leaders/decision-makers (i.e. Mayor, School Board President, Chamber President, Leisure Services Director, etc.) to develop collaborative strategies to redefine service delivery in Athens.

The second group to provide leadership training would involve the persons who are actually responsible for their individual agencies. This group might include individual agency directors, parent leaders, school principals, etc.

It was mentioned that the purpose of this leadership training would be to develop shared visions, common goals and missions. Sharing resources and developing collaboration in funding strategies and strategic planning are goals that could be achieved. Aligning goals and objectives at the highest levels of decision-makers

in the community as well as at the implementation level is an outcome that is desired. It was mentioned that this would be ongoing processes.

It was suggested that this process could be called Leadership PPA or Leadership OneAthens.

The group then began brainstorming the second topic, **“Continue refining our model; getting a clearer understanding on our objectives and strategies. Brainstorm outcomes that will help to achieve the ultimate goals as stated in the mission.”**

Some responses included:

1. Identifying the target population-this included:

- Single parents (male and female)
- Families (primary caregivers and their children)
- Expectant mothers
- Absentee parents
- Latino families
- Home school children and families

It was suggested that data be obtained concerning each of these target populations. It was also agreed that our target area would be the quadrant, or a subset of that quadrant, surrounding Fourth Street Elementary. It was mentioned that the center would be open for anyone, but the focus would be the targeted populations as identified above.

2. Monica shared some academic data relevant to Fourth Street Elementary.

Some of the data included:

- 17% of third graders at Fourth Street were retained.
- 33% of third graders did not meet standards in reading
- The average gain on the WRIT test for students at Fourth Street included 7.9 points for black students, 8.3 for Hispanic students, and 7.3 for white students. The average expected gain is 6 points.

3. It was suggested that we might want a faith-based representative from the community on the team.

4. It was recommended that the academic focus not be 0-5th grade, but rather Pre-natal to 5th grade.

The next brainstorming topic was **“Brainstorm ideas on how to motivate young adults and the working poor to ‘drink out of the trough’”** (How do we get people to use the services?). Red reviewed the Enrichment Model (both the academic and enrichment components) that we had been discussed at a previous meeting

Some responses included:

1. Provide a full service “case manager” with a common entry point for all providers. This case manager would be the initial point of contact. The person would then be routed to the appropriate place.

2. A single intake procedure for all participating service providers could be developed.
3. Perhaps the enrichment center serves a triage role of helping to address the immediate crisis and then helping the person to the next step.
4. Provide a simple way for needs to be linked to the appropriate provider.
5. Community Connections might be the agency to help coordinate this effort.
6. Positive social and recreational opportunities could be the hook to get people involved.
7. Accessibility and personal invitations, support, and mentoring are ways to get more participation.
8. Providing transportation.
9. Provide food for events to get parents to attend.
10. Provide drop-in child care.
11. Provide parent-child educational opportunities—develop a partnership with the library.
12. Provide a bi-lingual element to childcare.
13. Provide an Early Care and Learning Center.
14. DFCS gets people by providing “things” such as Medicaid, food stamps, TANF, employment
15. Offer service learning opportunities to residents of housing authority (it is mandated by housing authority) and perhaps others.
16. Work with Hands On Northeast Georgia to provide service learning components.
17. ESOL and GED can also be hooks.
18. Various support groups and relationship building for parents. This could include informal parent groups, Spanish speaking groups, educational classes, parent-child reading activities, etc. These programs could be modeled after Even Start.
19. Family and personal goal-setting

Some particular strategies to draw adult males include:

1. Social and recreational activities. It was mentioned that sports and recreational activities can help develop trust that can then be used to involve these persons in other programs.
2. Alternative educational opportunities.
3. Jobs.
4. Paid apprenticeship opportunities.
5. WIA-possible opportunities for reemployment.
6. Provide a non-threatening environment; develop a male atmosphere with male speakers.
7. Provide mentoring activities.
8. Provide male friendly marketing strategies as we seek their involvement.

It was emphasized that whatever strategies were developed the success would be measured by our two criteria 1. Every child reading on grade level by the end of third grade. 2. Every adult with a job.

A question that might be asked to the community to get their input might be, “What is the major barrier preventing you from being successful?”

Continuous improvement is a focus of this initiative.

Some summarizing ideas included:

1. The Enrichment center might serve as the first step to connect people to the service(s) that they need—a single community entry point.
2. The approach will be holistic with ongoing case management support.
3. When a family has a crisis, this will be the one place they can always turn to for help.
4. There will be two levels of leadership /orientation for community leaders.
5. The agency middle managers and caseworkers would participate in one level of orientation/leadership to get their buy-in and ongoing support.
6. The group needs to begin developing a common vision.

The next steps include:

1. Prior to the next meeting each member of the team needs to answer the following, “ We now have a Family Enrichment Center, as you walk in, what do you experience?” (Who greets you? What does it look like? Why did you come? How does it feel? Etc. etc.) Red asked everyone to send their “homework” to Jim prior to the next meeting and he would compile a summarized draft vision.
2. **The next meeting is scheduled for June 25 from 8:30-11:15.** Monica will try to get a school bus and the group will meet with representatives in the community. The group will take a tour of the neighborhood to get a better idea of resources, needs, and a better understanding of the community.

The meeting adjourned.