

CARVER COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

DATE: February 11, 2014

LEADER: Sam Deweese

TIME: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

RECORDER: Lisa Gjerde

COUNCIL MEMBERS			LIAISON MEMBERS			GUESTS
Name	P	A	Name	P	A	Name
Caroline Beise	√		Alene Chelman	√		Commissioner Tim Lynch
Sam Deweese	√		Gary Norman	√		Peter Dahl, SW Metro Educ Coop
Christine Dondlinger	√					Diane Fedie, SW Metro Educ Coop
Lisa Gjerde	√					
Lisa Inman		√				
Sue Kunitz		√				
Ben Maas		√				
Rod Sawtell	√					
Twyla Sawtell	√					
Becky Sorenson	√					
Eddie Tipton	√					
Virginia Wright	√					

Agenda	Activity/Discussion	Decision/Action/Conclusion
Call to Order	Sam called the meeting to order.	Approved by consensus.
Approval of January Minutes	Caroline and Becky moved to approve the minutes.	Approved by consensus.
Guest Speakers: Southwest Metro	Peter Dahl, Therapist, and Diane Fedie, School Counselor and Student Services Coordinator, came to our meeting to discuss the operation of	

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<p>Educational Cooperative</p>	<p>the Southwest Metro Educational Cooperative (SWMEC). The Minnesota River Valley and The Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative merged this school year into the SWMEC to combine services with Carver and Scott counties. It provides numerous service programs, including Adult Basic Education, English Language Learners and General Education Diplomas, high school-level career tech programs, Alternative Learning Center (ALC), pregnant and parenting teens, Emotional Behavioral Disorder and students with cognitive or autistic disabilities, some elementary programs, and a Day Treatment (WOW) program.</p> <p>Students who attend New Beginnings and ALC programs are often there because of attendance issues at their regular schools or because they are falling behind in credits. Also, their need is often related to mental health or chemical dependency issues. Some simply need a smaller student-to-teacher ratio.</p> <p>Peter said the programs, in general, address the student as a “whole” person. The Catalyst program is an intermediate program in which students “are able and capable of being successful but have some anxiety and/or depression issues” and have been in either treatment or the hospital. Catalyst provides a daily psycho-therapy group, and it offers students individual time with a therapist on site, who will work in tandem with their outside therapist. There are currently about 16 students in Catalyst, while there are 50+ in the ALC program. Peter said that mental health workers are “embedded” in some of the other programs as well.</p> <p>Students receive access to programs at SWMEC via referrals from their own school districts, because of a service that their district cannot provide. The district that refers the student will pay for the services, and the student can still be actively involved in his/her school’s extracurricular activities. If the student earns a diploma while attending SWMEC, the diploma itself will come from his/her own school. Some</p>	
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<p>SW Metro Educational Cooperative (cont.)</p>	<p>students go to SWMEC with the goal of transitioning back into their regular school. Some districts have or might decide to have their own ALC due to funding, location, curriculum, bussing, student caps, etc.</p> <p>When asked about parent involvement, our guests agreed that this is sometimes a difficult issue, but then they look at how they can help the student succeed in spite of a lack of parental involvement. While SWMEC does not have the funding to have a program to help parents, they do encourage parents to become involved.</p> <p>One of the hurdles that SWMEC encounters is that of their students arriving in a “timely manner,” a problem which often leads to continued academic failure. The issue appears to be that the students don’t have a way to get to school or the support they need to get there. While some will utilize SmartLink, this service cannot always get them there in time for morning classes. They have also tried carpooling, riding bikes, or even walking; however, transportation is a big hurdle (and an even bigger expense).</p>	
<p>March 18th Meeting Review</p>	<p>Virginia has 2 planned attendees, and Becky has some people in mind.</p>	<p>We noted that, once again, “transportation” is an important “need” in the area of mental health care in Carver County, and we should address this in our next letter to the Board of Commissioners.</p> <p>Eddie wondered how other counties have dealt with transportation issues; he agreed to do some research and report back to our LAC with his findings, hopefully in the March meeting.</p>
<p>Draft of the Letter to the Board of Commissioners</p>	<p>Although a bit short on time, we briefly discussed topics that should be included in the letter: how we’ve been educating ourselves recently with guest speakers; some common threads regarding needs in the community, such as transportation and housing; the necessity of finding ways to collaborate better; and making people more aware of services. We also need to readdress some issues mentioned in our previous letter, including the issue of funding.</p>	<p>We will sort out the details, including the room, at the March 11th LAC meeting.</p>
<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>The motion was made to adjourn.</p>	<p>Approved by consensus.</p>