

CMCA Board of Directors,

Even though our offices were closed to the public throughout January due to COVID and several days in February due to weather, we are fully open and running at full steam at the moment. We launched two surveys in February to gauge our employees’ opinions and to get customer feedback from our members. The annual Employee Opinion Survey and the Member Survey have led to several improvements in the past. Results from the Member Survey will help us better understand how our members are accessing our services and will give us insight into the coaching relationships that have developed with families. Highlights from survey results will be shared with you at the next board meeting.

You will notice that the Executive Director’s report that follows is considerably different than it has been in the past. By using more descriptive and visual data we hope to give you a more intuitive snapshot of our work. We have organized the report using our Theory of Change since it drives our work towards achievement of our mission. The broad categories of work reflect our belief that social connections, family well-being, and economic stability lead to social mobility and thriving communities. For a deeper dive into this data and updates as the data is available, go to our website and click on the “About Us” tab and then click on “Our Impact.” While our data dashboard is still being refined, we are establishing robust measures of our progress that we can use for ongoing program improvement. I hope you find this new report useful but please feel free to offer feedback or suggestions about the type of information you would like to track.



The agenda for the February 24 meeting is straightforward. My succession plan and Beth Vossler’s succession plans are included in the consent agenda for your approval because they require your regular approval but there have been no changes. This year rather than highlighting county initiatives, we are highlighting program initiatives at each board meeting. Last month our focus was on Head Start and the

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BRIDGE program. This month we will focus on the “Social Connections” wheel of our Theory of Change. Brooke Eskridge, Director of Family and Community Services will offer an overview of the programs and initiatives that help our members build social connections and explain why that is important. We will also revisit our mission statement per guidance from the State Department of Social Services. Our mission is to “build relationships to empower people, strengthen resilience, and improve quality of life for all members of the community.” Please see the letter from Susan Hart to the State DSS as we will be discussing how our mission statement addresses poverty in our communities.

We will also discuss our vaccine policy. You will recall that in October you approved a COVID vaccine requirement for all Head Start employees. In December you approved a revision to the policy based on requirements from the Office of Head Start that required everybody two years old and up to wear masks in Head Start facilities. You may recall that members of the Head Start Policy Council expressed reservations about the policy and did not endorse it. Since then, the omicron variant burned through our communities and forced several closures of our Head Start centers. We tracked the positive COVID case rate closely and closed our centers to the public on a week-to-week basis. The numbers have dramatically decreased, and the CDC is now contemplating changes to their mask guidance even as states and school districts across the country remove their mask requirements. In addition, Missouri is one of twenty-five states that appealed the vaccine mandate from OSHA and the Office of Head Start. Currently those mandates are part of a court ordered injunction that effectively blocks those requirements. Chief Bickell, our public sector representative from Linn, called me several weeks ago to ask if we could revisit our policy at the Feb. 24 board meeting. Beth Vossler, Head Start Director and I are recommending to the Head Start Policy Council and to the Board that we place our policy on indefinite HOLD until we receive further guidance, or the court ordered injunctions are resolved. I look forward to discussing this with you.

Last, please see the Save the Date notice regarding an event with the Harlem Wizards in Jefferson City that we are planning for April 23. I’ll tell you all about it at our meeting.

As always, please let me know if you have questions about anything in the board packet or anything else. My cell phone number is 573-864-2281.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darin Preis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Darin Preis

