



2375 Gordon Road
Alpena, MI 49707



Community Advisory Groups Meeting Highlights Monday, August 24, 2020

The combined FGP and SCP Advisory Group meeting was held by conference call Monday, August 24, 2020. FGP members Dolores Baker, Janet Callan, Mary Ford (new), Madeline Hibner, and SCP members Annie Hepburn, Jennifer Ordway, Helen Johnson, Donna Richey participated in the call.

Membership Update:

- Foster Grandparent Member Mary Lou Froggett, and FGP Community Member Nancy Wedge resigned from the Advisory Group.
- Foster Grandparent Mary Ford was welcomed to the group to replace Mary Lou.
- A new member from the educational community is being sought to replace Nancy Wedge.
- Neither Mary Lou nor Nancy Wedge are replaceable and we are very grateful for the time and contributions both ladies brought to the group!

Discussion Items:

- FGP/SCP volunteer stipends continue to be supported during the pandemic by a Temporary Pay Allowance (TPA) and has been extended to 9/30/2020. No new updates on staff wages and benefits - which are also authorized through 9/30/2020.
- With the 9/30 TPA extension we will be able to resume paying the allowance to Foster Grandparents based on the posted start date of the school where each volunteer serves following the schedule served during the 2019 – 2020 school year.
- Volunteers returning to in-person service but at a reduced schedule due to the pandemic will be supplemented with the TPA not to exceed hours paid in the prior school year.
- FGP/SCP staff are working on a COVID-19 Return to Service policy with procedures on how to return to in-person service safely. These procedures will be guided by the latest information from the CDC and will likely mirror NEMCSA requirements where practical. This will be in addition to any policy and procedures dictated by the volunteer stations.
- The ongoing pandemic challenges statewide has FGP/SCP staff reconsidering in-person recognition events in the way of picnics/ice cream social as previously discussed. Instead, we are planning on a “drive-through recognition in three locations most likely in October.

Director’s Report, Heidi Powers, FGP/SCP Project Director:

- AASA (state funder) abruptly ended the FGP/SCP 2019 – 2020 program year effective 7/31/2020 which otherwise would have ended 9/30/2020. This action resulted in a combined loss of funding in the amount of \$37, 676 (FGP \$1,373 / SCP \$36,303) and was taken to address the overall state budget shortfall due to the pandemic.
 - We received an invitation to apply for the AASA FGP/SCP grants starting 10/1/2020 but have not received a budget amount. We fear a 36% reduction in funding may become permanent.



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- Most disturbing about the reduction in funding is AASA received an overall 1% reduction in state funding of which 91% was accounted for by the early ending of the three Senior Volunteer Programs.
- No drastic actions need to be taken at this time to adjust to the funding loss. The \$37,000 plus loss is mostly made up for by the unexpended mileage reimbursement, in-service meeting costs, and recognition expenses - all activities suspended by the pandemic.
- Our current Senior Companion census is holding steady through the support of the TPA however, we anticipate once the allowance is no longer available and an absence of service opportunities is realized we will receive an influx of retirements. We have lost four Foster Grandparent volunteers since summer break mostly contributed to the pandemic.
- The TPA is allowing us to exceed our VSY requirement for Senior Companions but this will not be the case for Foster Grandparents when school resumes due to not being able to recruit new volunteers during the pandemic.

NEMCSA board representative Madeline Hibner provided the Advisory Group with updates from the NEMCSA Board of Directors meetings.

Next meeting: Monday, November 9, 2020, 9:30 AM – FGP/SCP Combined Advisory Group Conference Call
Call-in Details:
(605) 313-4489
Access Code: 942653

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Powers, FGP/SCP Project Director