



Executive Director's Staff Report
March 20, 2025
(February 21, 2025 – March 20, 2025)

BOARD / STAFF

- **Executive Committee** – The committee held its regular virtual monthly meeting on March 11, 2025, at 2:00 PM to review the March 20, 2025, Board Meeting agenda, the FY26 COLA for CCSF and CMHF eligible funded partners, and to receive updates on important staff activities since the February 20, 2025, Board meeting.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS / ALLOCATIONS
(CCSF, CMHF, Funding Partnerships & Initiatives)

- **Monitoring impacts of Executive Orders and other federal changes** – Staff continue to monitor the impact of changes at the federal level for MHB's SAMHSA System of Care grant in addition to the impact for funded partners. Staff are also monitoring the impact of the White House's Executive Orders for MHB and funded partners.
- **Annual Site Visits** – Staff completed annual site visits by mid-March. Emerging issues, trends, and other highlights will be shared at a future Board Meeting.
- **FY26 – 28 Early Childhood Social Emotional Development for Children Application Process** – MHB received 25 applications requesting a total of more than \$4M for the \$1.5M in funding available for social emotional development competitive grants. Of the 25 applications received, 7 are currently funded partners and 5 also receive funding from the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund. There will be 5 joint review teams comprised of Trustees and Community Reviewers. Everyone will review the Nurses for Newborn's application to norm their scoring and increase the reliability of the review process. Joint Review Teams will meet between March 31 and April 11 to discuss assigned applications. Two of the applications are for home visiting programs and the majority focus either on prevention or therapeutic interventions. Based upon available funding, it is anticipated that 10 applications may be awarded funding, which translates to the top two applications per Joint Review Team. This second Early Childhood grant application cycle shows a considerable improvement in the quality of applications received.
- **FY26 – 28 Early Childhood Partnership Application Process** – MHB received 1 application for the Mental Health Education for Parents/Caregivers opportunity and 4 applications for the Professional Development for Childcare Providers opportunity. Program Committee members Rob Poirier, Marcia Hayes-Harris, and Julia López will review up to 4 partnership applications recommended by staff from March 22 – 30. The committee is scheduled to meet May 3 to discuss the top two proposals in each category, as well as Joint Review Team recommendations from the Social Emotional Development for Children

competitive application process. Funding recommendations will be provided to the full Board at the May 15 Board Meeting.

- **Systems Change Planning Grant Application Process** – MHB received 4 applications for the \$500K set aside from reserves to fund a 12-month planning process, not to exceed \$100K per project. The MHB Grant Portal opened March 10 for Trustee reviews which included a new AI summary of each application. Trustees were charged to use the on-line evaluation tool in Foundant to record comments and questions which will be discussed at the March 20 Board meeting. At the meeting, Trustees will determine which of the 4 applications they wish to approve with no further applicant action required or which to invite to make 15-minute presentations at the April 17 Board Meeting. At the April Board Meeting Trustees can decide to recommend one or more finalists or defer the decision until the May 15 Board Meeting.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS / STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- **System of Care St. Louis** – The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) issued a revised Notice of Award for the current year of SOC funding. The revision includes a requirement to complete a sustainability plan by the end of year three. This was a standard requirement in previous Cooperative Agreements, so it could signal SAMHSA’s intent to continue funding beyond the current year.
- **St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Commission** – Deputy Director, Serena Muhammad, provided an update to the St. Louis County Children’s Service Fund Program and Performance Committee about the strategy to address youth gun violence in St. Louis County. This was a mid-year progress report (July 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024) on the youth engagement activities that St. Louis County CSF has funded in partnership with VPC.

ADMINISTRATION

- **Accounting Update** – The auditors are scheduled to conduct their field work for the FY24 audit the first week in April.
- **Senior Fund Transition Update** – The Senior Fund anticipates approval of a new vendor for accounting and controller services at their March Board Meeting. At this time, Controller Susan Kabat is still serving as their Controller and assisting with accounting. The Senior Fund will relocate to the CIC in the Cortex innovation corridor on March 21. Their departure frees up two offices and two parking spaces for MHB staff, which have been reassigned effective April 1.

OTHER

- **People’s Health Centers’ Ribbon Cutting February 21 Marks Merger** – Prevention Partnership Director Lisa Potts and Early Childhood Program Director Denise Carter attended the ribbon cutting ceremony marking the merger of ALM Hopewell Center with People’s Health Center.

- **Introducing MHB’s Data and Performance Analyst to St. Louis County CSF February 24** – MHB’s County colleagues introduced Xinyue Zhang to their team over lunch at the Fountain on Delmar.
- **Washington University Panel on Exploring Careers in Public Health February 25** – Clinical Partnership Director Poli Rijos served as a panelist to offer advice and encouragement to WashU undergraduates interested in public health. The event was co-hosted by the WashU Center for Career Engagement and the Program in Public Health & Society. Professionals from a wide range of agencies and institutions provided insights into navigating and succeeding in the public health profession.
- **Jamie Opsal’s Retirement Celebration February 27** – Several MHB staff attended Senior Fund Executive Director Jamie Opsal’s rescheduled retirement celebration to wish her well.
- **Trauma-Informed Training March 5** – Prevention Partnership Director Lisa Potts attended a Trauma-Informed training session in O’Fallon, MO delivered by Josh Varner.
- **Explore the Funding Landscape Event March 11** – MHB, in partnership with the two other city tax levy funders Senior Fund and DD Resources, hosted a meeting at the O’Fallon Park Recreation Complex from 9:30 – 11:30 AM for funded partners. Keynote speakers included Sheldon Weisgrau, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy at the Missouri Foundation for Health and Casey Millburg, Director of Policy for City of St. Louis. Sheldon’s presentation addressed implications of the new administrations’ activities and policies for Medicaid and Medicare and what changes could mean for clients of funded partners. Casey discussed the anticipated impacts to the city, its workforce, and city services related to the anticipated loss of federal funding.

Additionally, representatives of five state-wide advocacy groups introduced funded partners to their advocacy work: Melissa Robinson from the Missouri In Home Council; Bridget Gettemeier from the Missouri Council on Aging; Leigh Ann Haun from the Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council; Casey Hanson from Kids Win Missouri; and Christine Woody from Empower Missouri. The Missouri Behavioral Health Council was invited to participate, but unfortunately did not accept.

More than 90 people attended the in-person event. PowerPoint presentations, curated articles related to navigating through change, and a post-event survey were shared with those who attended following the event.

- **Missouri Government Financial Officers Association Meeting March 12** – Controller Susan Kabat participated in the Eastern Chapter meeting.
- **St. Louis County Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative March 13** – Deputy Director Serena Muhammad and STL Area VPC Project Director Justin Mosley attended the meeting.
- **St. Louis Early Childhood Implementation Planning March 18** – Cassandra, Serena, and Denise participated in the March planning session focused on quality and the introduction of a potential three-year pilot model.