

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting
May 11, 2011
9:00 a.m.
Sound Waters, Cove Island Park

Council members present:

Burke, Jennienne Peoples	Care to Care (Family Centers)
Farrell, Anne	UConn Stamford
Feder, Karen	Abilis Youth Services
Fox, Bridget	Chair, Stamford School Readiness Council
Glenn, Shelia	ROSCO Agency
Mullet, Alisha	Sound Waters
Reardon, Ellen	Stamford Museum and Nature Center
Sabia, Michele	Stamford Public Schools
Short, Bob	Family Centers
Weller, Eva	PLTI
Wenz	First Presbyterian Nursery School

Advisors:

Sargent, Carol	Childcare Learning Centers
Tarantino, Sherry	Sacred Heart School

Guests:

Ahuja, Sonja	Liaison, Graustein Memorial Fund
Brennan, Karen	United Way of Western CT
Garcia, Marita	
Hickley, Julie	Bright Horizons
Rauh, Polly	Stamford Board of Education

I. Welcome and Introductions

Bridget began the meeting by thanking Alisha Mullet and the Sound Waters staff for hosting today's meeting.

II. Minutes from April 2011 Meeting

The minutes from April's meeting will be voted on in June.

III. Announcements

- **Stamford Achieves Success Symposium — Thursday, May 12 from 8:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.** The Success Symposium on Summer Learning for All Students will be a great opportunity for educators, community leaders, teachers, and parents to learn about the need for ongoing learning during the summer months. It is not too late to register.

- **Early Education Childhood Fair — Saturday, May 21 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:** Now in its 4th year, we'll again offer fun activities for children including a touch a truck event featuring Stamford Police and Fire vehicles, habitat exploration at SoundWaters, a concert by the Bossy Frog, and a Domestic Violence Crisis Center Peace Works puppet show along with arts and crafts, face painting, tattoos, and more. There will also be information for families about resources available to them in the community.
- **Two Angry Moms, Monday, May 23 at 7:00 p.m.:** A screening of the acclaimed documentary, *Two Angry Moms*, which chronicles what happens when two moms start a grass-roots revolution to bring attention to the need for nutritional food options in schools. Dr. Mathur will facilitate a panel discussion featuring filmmaker/mom Amy Kalafa; licensed psychologist Dr. Dale Atkins; a nutritionist from Columbia University, Dr. Sharon Akabas; and a representative from the Stamford Public Schools/Chartwells, Ken Wolfe. The Avon Theatre is donating the space and we will host an invitation-only reception before the movie. Stamford Hospital, the Avon Theatre, and the United Way of Western Connecticut will be partners in this event. All members of the School Readiness Council are invited to the cocktail reception from 6:00-7:00 p.m.

IV. Regular Reports

- CLC's and Sacred Heart's reports were sent to the Council in advance of the meeting and are included as addendums to these minutes. (See Addendums A and B.)
- Carol Sergeant added that CLC's Parent Advisory Council did an amazing job recognizing teachers during Teacher Appreciation week. Due to school vacations and IC vacations, there were not a lot of events in April, but there will be more in May. There will again be a storytime kick off night for the Week of the Young Child at the Ferguson Library.
- Sherry Tarantino offered that Sacred Heart is nearing the finish line with their NAECYC accreditation application and will be submitting it on or before May 31, 2011. The group offered their congratulations on this important next step.
- For those new to our meeting, Bridget summarized the sub committees of the School Readiness Council currently focused on implementing our Early Childhood Blueprint strategies. The Education Committee is focused on improving Early Childhood Education in Stamford, especially around the transition to Kindergarten process. The Health and Wellness Committee is focusing on improving children's healthcare and promoting wellness in Stamford, including physical, emotional, and oral health. And the Parent Outreach Committee is tasked with improving family understanding of child development and access to early childhood information and services. Specific reports followed:
 - The Health and Wellness Committee met on Monday, May 9 and had a robust discussion around nutrition and BMI data collection. At our June meeting, Judith Meyers from the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) will share with us the CHDI framework and tool kit for community collaborative health initiatives. CHDI is a partner in the Discovery initiative is available to work with us to integrate our activities with data collection/tracking.
 - The Parent Outreach Committee is just beginning to formally meet. We have recruited a number of parents and partners and are in the process of creating a plan for work we'd like to do in the late spring and fall.
 - The Education Committee report is offered in the New Business section.

V. Old Business

There was no old business.

VI. New Business

- **School Readiness Grant Application Background:** As the SRC is aware, this is a full application year for sites applying to use for SR funding and for the SRC to apply to the state. There was no increase in funding, but also there were no cuts, so overall this is positive news. Applications were due on April 5 after which a small review committee met. Applications have now be revised based on feedback and resubmitted. Most of the substantive changes were around school's parent handbooks. The state is looking more closely at these resources and is hopeful to see them be family friendly and comprehensive. CLC and Sacred Heart area in the process of revising their handbooks and they will be ready this summer. Bridget commended CLC and Sacred Heart for their hard work and efforts, especially around registering teachers with the state ... no small amount of work. Bridget asked the SRC to review the Overview of School Readiness Grant Application for FY 2012-2014 handout provided at the meeting (see Addendum C).
- **School Readiness Grant Application Resolution:** Bridget read the Resolution (see Addendum C) to the SRC and asked for a formal motion to accept. The SRC voted unanimously to accept the Resolution to submit an application to the State Department of Education in the amount of \$3,742,800 for the continuance of the School Readiness Program.
- **Early Childhood Teacher Credential:** Anne Farrell briefed the group on an early childhood teacher certification program that the CT State Department of Education (SDE) is rolling out as a pilot project. CT statute (Public Act 05-245) requires that 50% of teachers in school readiness programs have Bachelor's degree in ECE or a related field by 2015. By the end of 2009, about one-third had a BA, one quarter had an AA, and about 40% had no degree. In March 2011, SDE announced a pilot program among state institutions of higher education. SDE will approve programs that will eventually offer the Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC). The UConn Department of Human Development & Family Studies at the main campus is participating in the pilot program. The SDE will credential at the AA (level A) and BA (level B) degrees, and individuals will have to demonstrate coursework and practica/placement at infant/toddler and preschool levels, respectively, if they wish to be certified with those populations. There is also an alternate pathway available; Amy Watson of Charter Oak discussed this with the School Readiness Council earlier this year. Approximately three years ago, UConn Stamford began recruiting an early childhood educator into a faculty/lecturer position, but the position was cut due to budgetary constraints. Anne shared with the Committee that UConn Stamford Department of HDFS continues to view this position as a priority and has written a position justification. It is unlikely, however, that a new position will be approved in the current fiscal environment. The UConn Stamford ECTC would enable individuals with the AA degree in ECE to articulate into a BA program at Stamford. The ECTC requires a rigorous course of study in infant/toddler and preschool development.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8 AT 9:00 A.M.
IN THE MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM, GOVERNMENT CENTER.**

Addendum A: CLC Report

School Readiness Council Report
Childcare Learning Centers, Inc.
April, 2011

- Program Utilization
 - a. Authorized Capacity – Full Day – 334; Part Day – 97; Extended Day – 113 = 544
 - b. Ages: 3 year olds – 67; 4 year olds – 329; 5 year olds - 148
 - c. Children with disabilities = 32 with IEP
7 without IEP
 - d. Notes and Trends: We are having more requests for three year olds than four year olds to register for next year. We are not sure why.

- Program Attendance:
 - a. 99% Attendance
 - b. Notes and trends: - Attendance down for family emergencies

- Staffing
 - a. Open Positions – 1 Substitute
 - b. Recruitment – ad on-line, local newspapers, postings at NCC
 - c. Training:
 - Behavior Health Team meets bi-weekly, focusing on universal practices for transitions, ways to improve staff morale, and individual case work.
 - Accreditation Facilitation Project conducted “Bring Out the Leader in You” for staff in supervisory roles. Workshop was presented by Donna Delohery on April 26th. This was session one of a two session training. The second session will take place on May 10, 2011
 - Julie Coakley and Michele Sabia conducted Action Planning with all of the Instructional Coordinators, Cluster Coordinators and Director. Action Plans were based on feedback sessions that occurred after the monitoring visits.

- Special Events/Activities:
 - Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children.
 - “Sports Day with Dad’s” was held on April 6th and 7th in Cluster A
 - “Come Visit with Me” - Spring celebrations held throughout the month. Children and families made kites, bird nests, planted flowers.
 - Parent Advisory Committee meeting was held on Wednesday, April 20th.
 - Classrooms are finishing field trip to the Bruce Museum and beginning trips to Stepping Stones
 - “Kids Helping Kids” came to Cluster A on April 28th. Middle School children use Learning- In- A-Bag materials with individual children.
 - Notes and trends- N/A

Addendum B: Sacred Heart Report

Sacred Heart School
School Readiness Report
April 2011

Program Utilization:

- School Day – School Year – 47 children
- One girl (3 year old class) withdrew due to mother's upcoming birth of a sibling and inability to get her daughter to school in the morning.
- Ages – 3 year olds/17 4 year olds/30
- Children with disabilities: 2 children with an IEP
45 children without an IEP

Program Attendance:

- Students: Attendance has been wonderful. 1 or 2 children out per day from school. Absent due to parent appointments, new school visits for 4 year olds and spring allergies.
- Staff members: This has been a rough month. Several staff members were out due to sickness, emergencies and planned personal days. We hired two (2) substitutes to help out in several times this month.
- We were also please that a few of our parents were able to step up to volunteer to stay for at least part of the day to help out in our classrooms.

Activities and events:

- On April 1st, we held our annual "April Pool's Day" event. We dedicate this day to teaching our young students the importance of water safety. Each "new" child to SHS received a free copy of the book "Stewie the Duck – Learns to Swim", courtesy of Stew Leonard's.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences took place on Tuesday, April 12th. Some of the parents made appointments with the teachers before and after the 12th to sit down and speak with the teachers. Approximately, 65% of our parents were able to schedule a conference. 10% of the parents scheduled a phone conference.
- Green Meadows Farm again came to visit our school with a assorted animals. Children were able to touch and see a pig, chicks, chickens, turtles, rabbits, mice, a lizard and the ever popular "Hissing Roaches".

Addendum C: Overview of School Readiness Grant Application for FY 2012-2014

Overview of School Readiness Grant Application for FY 2012-2014

Total Grant request from the City of Stamford to CT State Department of Education:
\$3,742,800

Slot request: \$3,657,300

Reimbursement to Childcare Learning Centers, Inc. in the amount of
\$3,537,300 for services provided including:

Full Day/Full Year slots: 334	(334 x \$8,346 = \$2,787,564)
Part Day/Part Year slots: 97	(97 x \$4,500 = \$436,500)
Extended Day slots: 113	(113 x \$2,772 = \$313,236)

Reimbursement to Sacred Heart School in the amount of \$120,000 for services
provided including:

School Day/School Year slots: 20 (20 x \$6,000 = \$120,000)

Administrative request: \$85,500

Salary and benefits SR Liaison
Travel
Administrative supplies

The City of Stamford contributes \$2,124 to the grant to close the gap in benefits.

Addendum D: Resolution

RESOLUTION

SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the State Department of Education has made application materials available to eligible cities in order to facilitate their request for State of Connecticut funding assistance for the operation of the School Readiness Program for the year beginning July 1, 2011, and

WHEREAS, the Stamford School Readiness Council wishes to participate in the School Readiness Program with State of Connecticut’s funding assistance,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE STAMFORD SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL,

THAT the Mayor of the City of Stamford, Michael A. Pavia, is hereby authorized to submit to the State Department of Education an application in the amount of \$3,742,800 for the continuance of the School Readiness Program currently operated through the collaboration of the City of Stamford, the Stamford Public Schools, and the Childcare Learning Centers, Inc. The application will also include funding for School Readiness slots at Sacred Heart School on Schuyler Avenue. This plan is reflected in the City of Stamford’s application for State of Connecticut funding assistance.

This resolution was passed at the Stamford School Readiness meeting held May 11, 2011, at which a quorum was present and voted in favor of its passage.

I, Donna Loglisci, City and Town Clerk of the City of Stamford, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Connecticut, hereby certify that the following is a true copy of a resolution adopted at a meeting of the School Readiness Council of the City of Stamford, duly held on the 11th day of May, 2011.

And I do further certify that the above resolution has not been in any way altered, amended, or repealed, and is now in full force and effect.

Date

Donna Loglisci
Town & City Clerk