

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting
June 8, 2011
9:00 a.m.
Government Center, 4th Floor Cafe

Council members present:

Brennan, Karen	Stamford Discovery, United Way of Western CT
Burke, Jennienne Peoples	Care to Care (Family Centers)
Canepa, Jenny	Parent Outreach Committee/Parent Representative
Cook, Lucia	Literacy Volunteers of Stamford/Greenwich
Farrell, Anne	UConn Stamford
Feder, Karen	Abilis Youth Services
Fox, Bridget	Chair, Stamford School Readiness Council
Morrow, Polly	Pitney Bowes/Parent Representative
Rauh, Polly	Stamford Board of Education
Reardon, Ellen	Stamford Museum and Nature Center
Sabia, Michele	Stamford Public Schools
Sandahl, Margo	Stamford Public Schools
Ward, Caroline	Ferguson Library

Advisors:

Garvin-Kester, Barbara	Childcare Learning Centers
Sargent, Carol	Childcare Learning Centers
Tarantino, Sherry	Sacred Heart School

Guests:

Ahuja, Sonja	Liaison, Graustein Memorial Fund
Coakley, Julie	CES
Garcia, Maritza	Adult Education
Nizzardo, Paula	CES

I. Welcome and Introductions

Bridget began the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and circulating a list of meeting dates for 2011-12.

II. Announcements

Bridget invited everyone to share news of upcoming events or opportunities:

- Ellen Reardon shared that the Stamford Museum and Nature Center is offering a special deal for those who ride the city bus to the Museum. If you show your bus ticket, admission is free (except on special event days).

- Anne Farrell shared news of an art event featuring cartoons and comics taking place at UConn. She will send details out via e-mail.
- Polly Morrow informed the group that Pitney Bowes helped fund the newly opened Parent-Teacher Resource Room at Stepping Stones.
- Karen Feder has the contact information for a 12-year-old magician who performs for a \$25 donation to his college fund. He is quite good and very entertaining.
- Barbara Garvin-Kester reported that CLC is the recipient of a 4-year United Way grant which will allow them to hire a person to run workshops and family nights around nutrition and cooking. She also mentioned that on December 4th there will a children's literature fair where famous authors of children's holiday books will be on hand to sign copies of books for purchase.

Bridget brought the group up-to-date on recent local budget cut outcomes. Two Instructional Coordinator positions were eliminated in the Board of Education budget. Pat Callahan and Janet Rancanello will no longer be with the program. They have been reassigned to elementary schools. In addition, Quality Enhancement funding has been reduced and will likely result in cuts across the board, including Jennienne Burke's part-time position and the part-time nurse at CLC. Finally, Department of Social Services (DSS) preschool slots will now be under the direction of State Department of Education, combining all School Readiness, DSS and Quality Enhancement funding under one agency. DSS will operate in much the same way in the coming year, but eventually there will be a new name and new approach for the overall system.

III. Regular Reports

Reports from Childcare Learning Centers and Sacred Heart were sent to the Council in advance of the meeting and are included as Addendums to this report.

Due to the full agenda, regular reports from the Health & Wellness, Education, and Parent Outreach Committees were not included today.

IV. Old Business

Bridget thanked those present who helped contribute to the great success of the 4th Annual Early Childhood Fair. We had a perfect, sunny May Saturday and attendance of over 400 people was terrific. Great fun was had by all.

The 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—on May 23 was a resounding success. Over 140 people were in attendance to watch the movie and participate in a panel discussion facilitated by Dr. Mathur. The panel included 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 donated the space and Stamford Hospital and the United Way of Western Connecticut were also partners for this event.

V. New Business

Big Apple Circus

Thanks to Michele Sabia we have secured 60 tickets to The Big Apple Circus and will be taking the 60 Head Start children who were unable to attend the Very Hungry Caterpillar performance in February. Bridget was able to get the buses donated and we have ordered additional safety harnesses.

CES Monitoring Reports

As the Council knows, monitoring is required of all School Readiness sites. Reports from Julie Coakley and Paula Nizzardo are included as Addendums to these minutes. In brief, there is no longer comprehensive monitoring, but instead more focused monitoring with identifiable issues sites are to work on each year. Programs are challenged, but great strides are being made. There is a clear need for additional technical assistance and professional development. Specific recommendations are outlined in the reports.

Graustein Memorial Fund

Sonja Ahuja, our liaison from the Graustein Memorial Fund, facilitated a conversation with the Council on early childhood efforts in Stamford over the last 10 years. The group pointed to the preschool benchmarks, our efforts around reflective practice, the lack of infant/toddler slots, the recognition of the importance of early childhood education, the addition of Michele Sabia as our Curriculum Associate, and the courses offered by Charter Oak as key indicators of early childhood progress and challenges in Stamford.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m. The next School Readiness Council meeting will be Wednesday, September 14th. Have a wonderful summer!

Addendum A: CLC Report

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

- Program Utilization
 - a. Authorized Capacity – Full Day – 334; Part Day – 97; Extended Day – 113 = 544
 - b. Ages: 3 year olds – 59; 4 year olds – 313; 5 year olds - 171
 - c. Children with disabilities = 32 with IEP
7 without IEP
 - d. Notes and Trends: Families are choosing to withdraw at the end of June due to redetermination raising fees.
- Program Attendance:
 - a. 100% Attendance. We are down one enrollment for extended day.
 - b. Notes and trends: - none
- Staffing
 - a. Open Positions – none
 - 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. Second session was presented by Donna Delohery on May 10th.
- Special Events/Activities:
 - Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children.
 - Kindergarten registration held at William Pitt on Tuesday, May 3rd.
 - Teacher Appreciation Breakfast held on Thursday, May 5th. Parent Advisory Council sponsored the breakfast.
 - Parent Advisory Council sponsored a Book Drive which yielded over 500 books for the Lending Libraries and \$175.00 for new classroom books.
 - Lunch and Learn – “Transitioning into Kindergarten” presented by Dr. Schreiner. and Dori Walker on May 12th
 - Week of the Young Child (May 16-21) - events included puppet shows, library card drive, a parade at the Stamford High School, Ice Cream Social and concluded with the Early Childhood Fair at Cove Island.
 - Dental Hygienist came to William Pitt on May 22nd and May 23rd.
 - Field trips to Stepping Stones held throughout the month
 - Parent Advisory Council meeting held on May 18th
 - Notes and trends- N/A

Addendum B: Sacred Heart Report

School Readiness Council Report Sacred Heart School May 2011

Program Utilization:

- School Day – School Year – 46 Students
- Male student withdrew due to mother's new out of town employment training.
- Ages – 3 yr. old/17 4 yr. old/29
- Children with disabilities: 2 children with an IEP
44 children without an IEP
- Enrollment for next year is nearing full. We have already used the 20 School Readiness slots. We have enrolled almost 17 of our 3 year old students for next year's Pre-K 4 classes. We have had at least 2 to 3 tours every week since January. Our 3 year old class is almost full.

Program Attendance:

- Students: Attendance is almost 100%. Occasionally, children are out due to parent appointments or activities.
- Staff members: Attendance is 100%.

Activities and events:

- Our Cinco de Mayo Celebration was a real success. Classrooms participated by making some of the foods needed for the celebration. Many of the children tasted and enjoyed the different foods offered for the day!
- Our City of Stamford nurse, visited to do the Hearing and Vision Screenings for all Pre-K 4 students. All but two students were screened as they were absent for the day.
- The Early Childhood Pre-K 4 Assessments took place for all Pre-K 4 students who will be attending Stamford Public School Kindergarten in the fall of 2011. Any other Pre-K 4 students who will be attending private or parochial schools next year, will be assessed by SHS staff members.
- SHS hosted a table at the Stamford Early Childhood Fair at Cove Park on Saturday, 5/21. We had many of our current parents and students attend this event and particularly the Bossy Frog performance!! I had many new prospective parents drop by with questions and took the SHS brochures. It was a great day for fun, visitors and weather!
- SHS completed the NAEYC Candidacy Report and sent it in to Washington, DC on 5/26. The report was due on 5/31/11. We are now waiting for our visit which should happen on or before November 31, 2011.

Addendum C: CES Report from Julie Coakley

Stamford School Readiness Monitoring Report for 2010-2011 William Pitt Child Development Center, Stillmeadow School and Maple Avenue

To: All School Readiness Staff
From: Julie Coakley, Early Childhood Consultant
Date: April 13, 2011

Fall/Spring 2010-2011 Monitoring Process

The Connecticut School Readiness Program requires regular program monitoring for the purpose of determining “how the program supports children’s learning and its alignment to the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks.” Classroom monitoring enables the program to identify strengths and address areas needing improvement on a regular basis. Monitoring gives the program staff the opportunity to plan long term improvements and to recognize consistent classroom strengths.

Last year School Readiness Monitoring focused on intentional teaching. A Monitoring Form (*Classroom Monitoring of the Cycle of Intentional Teaching*) which included a comprehensive look at planning, implementation of curriculum and assessment was utilized in a one hour observation in every classroom, (except three new classrooms at the Maple Ave. site and one classroom with a teacher new to the program at William Pitt). In addition, the monitor collected and analyzed the Lesson Plans for every classroom using the Intentional Teaching Monitoring form. The monitoring identified the specific areas in each process (planning, implementation or assessment) in the cycle of intentional teaching that were strengths or needed improvement. In addition, the activities and experiences planned were looked at through the lens of Bloom’s Taxonomy to see if and how higher order thinking skills were incorporated into the curriculum. The process identified the components of intentional teaching that needed improvement and the percentage of classrooms needing improvement.

Professional development based on the identified needs was delivered in the spring and early fall of 2010. The professional development sessions focused on: the **Preschool Assessment Framework**; Planning for Learning Using the **PAF** Data; Observation and Documentation of Children’s Work; Using the Lesson Plan Template; Extending Children’s Thinking (using Bloom’s Taxonomy) and Completing the Class Profile. Instructional Coordinators and Cluster Coordinators participated in training sessions prior to the trainings with teachers and assistant teachers.

This year the Monitoring focus narrowed to concentrate on the planning and implementation aspects of intentional teaching in each classroom. Feedback from the state on Lesson Plans submitted with the 2010 School Readiness Grant identified key components in the Lesson Plans that needed to be addressed. A Monitoring Form (*Classroom Monitoring of Curriculum Planning and Implementation*) which include the planning and implementation components from last year’s more comprehensive form was used. The Instructional Coordinators, Cluster Coordinators and Teachers were familiar with the components of the form.

Eighteen classrooms at William Pitt, one classroom at Stillmeadow School and three classrooms at Maple Avenue were monitored using the *Classroom Monitoring of Curriculum Planning and Implementation* form. The program monitor conducted a one hour observation in each classroom. In addition, the monitor collected and analyzed the

Lesson Plan for every classroom using the form. The experiences and questions planned were also examined through the lens of Bloom's Taxonomy to see if and how higher order thinking skills were incorporated into the curriculum. The purpose of the monitoring was to identify the specific components of curriculum planning and implementation that were strengths or needed improvement in each classroom.

After the classrooms were monitored the consultant met with each team of teachers to share the individual classroom Monitoring Report and to elicit the teachers' sense of their needs for training and/or technical assistance with regard to curriculum planning and implementation. Most of the time, Instructional Coordinators and Cluster Coordinators participated in the meetings.

This year, an additional process was initiated to plan for classroom improvements. The Program Director, Instructional Coordinators, Cluster Coordinators, School Readiness Liaison, Stamford Public School Curriculum Associate for ECE and the Program Monitor met, by Cluster, to develop a *Monitoring Action Plan* to individualize an improvement plan for each classroom. The goal of writing the *Monitoring Action Plan* is to deliver differentiated support for each classroom team.

Summary of Classroom Monitoring of Curriculum Planning and Implementation

Program Strengths

- Current Lesson Plans were posted in every one of the twenty-two classrooms. (100%)
- Performance Standards were identified in the Lesson Plans in every one of the twenty-two classrooms. (100%)
- Changes to the environment were noted in nineteen of the twenty-two Lesson Plans. (86%)
- Experiences/activities were developmentally appropriate *and at least some* were connected to the Performance Standards in nineteen of the twenty-two classrooms (86%). Note: In some cases, one or two experiences were connected to the standards or standards were erroneously connected to experiences, indicating that the team needs to work on strengthening their skills in this area.
- The Lesson Plan includes a daily plan for literacy in all twenty-two classrooms (100%). There are a range of practices with regard to literacy.
- The Lesson Plan reflected experiences, activities or questions at different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in thirteen of the twenty-two classrooms (59%). (This is a strength because it is a dramatic increase from 10% last year).
- The observation and documentation of the children's work was planned in sixteen of the twenty-two classrooms (73%).
- At least one (and in many cases more than one) of the experiences or activities on the Lesson Plan was *implemented* in all twenty-two classrooms (100%) during the classroom observation.
- Teachers engaged the children with *CT PAF* Performance Standards in nineteen of the twenty-two classrooms (86%).
- Teachers and assistant teachers are *using* effective teaching strategies in all twenty-two classrooms (100%) even though some teachers do not plan strategies.
- The teachers are providing experiences and activities that are not a part of the Lesson plan in all twenty-two classrooms (100%) allowing for child choice and spontaneous experiential learning.

Program Improvements

Fully implementing the “cycle of intentional teaching” is a complex process; in the statewide Training Wheels project the understanding is that it will take three years for program staff engaged in the project (with coaching for two years) to fully understand and implement the process. The staff in the School Readiness program at William Pitt, Stillmeadow and Maple Avenue range in their skills, abilities and prior training in implementing intentional teaching. Teachers, Assistant Teachers, Instructional Coordinators, Cluster Coordinators and the Program Director have worked hard to understand and implement a new approach to curriculum planning and implementation. **They have made progress in curriculum planning and implementation since last year.** As part of the individual classroom Monitoring Reports, a set of recommendations and “next steps” were proposed to address the learning needs of each classroom team. A **Monitoring Action Plan** was designed for each classroom team.

The following recommendations are focused on the process of planning and implementing meaningful curricula based on CT Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Performance Standards. These recommendations are an aggregate of the individual classroom recommendations and next steps. The School Readiness Program Director, Instructional Coordinators, Cluster Coordinators, School Readiness Liaison, Stamford Public School Curriculum Associate for ECE and the C.E.S. Consultant will meet to review the Monitoring Report and begin the discussion about next steps for program improvement.

Priority Recommendations to Improve Curriculum Planning and Implementation in Stamford School Readiness Programs

- Sixteen of the twenty-two classroom teams (73%) need training and support in planning at least three experiences across centers and across the daily schedule for each standard.
- Nineteen of the twenty-two classroom teams (86%) need training and support in planning and implementing a variety of teaching strategies for *children at different benchmarks* in each standard. The skill of planning strategies for each benchmark is critical to providing differentiated instruction.
- Ten of the twenty-two classroom teams (45%) need training and support in sharing information with families regarding intentional teaching.
- One of the twenty-two classrooms teams needs support and guidance to create a predictable, consistent, harmonious classroom environment as the foundation for curriculum planning and implementation.

Program Improvements

2011 Recommendations for Improvement in Curriculum Planning and Implementation By Classroom

***Note: If there are discrepancies between the summary numbers above and the number of classrooms listed below it may be an indication of a need for assistance to create a higher quality of practice in the specific area noted.**

Summary for William Pitt, Stillmeadow, Maple Ave.

- Technical assistance for the teachers to help them to strengthen their understanding of the standards and how to plan experiences and activities aligned to the standards: B-1, B-2, B-3, C-1, C-3, D-2, D-3, E-1, E-3, Stillmeadow, Maple Ave.-Room 11, Maple Ave.-Room 12

- Support and guidance for the teachers in planning more than one experience or activity aligned to a standard so that children may experience work in standards in different learning centers: B-1, B-2, B-3, C-3, D-2, D-3, Stillmeadow, Maple Ave.-Room 11, Maple Ave.-Room 12
- Support and guidance for the teachers in planning the strategies they will use to support children at all four Benchmarks in a standard: A-1, A-2, A-3, B-1, B-2, B-3, C-1, C-2, C-3, D-1, D-2, D-3, E-1, E-2, E-3, F-1, F-2, F-3, Stillmeadow, Maple Ave.-Room 9, Maple Ave.-Room 11, Maple Ave.-Room 12
- Guidance and support for the teachers in understanding Bloom's Taxonomy and planning activities at different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy: B-1, B-3, C-1, C-3, D-2, D-3, E-1, E-3, Maple Ave.-Room 11
- Support and guidance for the teachers in engaging children with Performance Standards in mind: B-3, D-3, Maple Ave.-Room 11, Maple Ave.-Room 12
- Support and guidance for the teachers in implementing the planned strategies for children at all four benchmarks: A-1, A-2, A-3, B-1, B-2, B-3, C-1, C-2, C-3, D-1, D-2, D-3, E-1, E-2, E-3, F-1, F-2, F-3, Stillmeadow, Maple Ave.-Room 9, Maple Ave.-Room 11, Maple Ave.-Room 12
- Guidance and support for the teachers in sharing information with families regarding intentional teaching: B-3, C-1, C-3, D-1, D-2, D-3, E-1, E-3, F-1, F-2, F-3, Maple Ave.-Room 11

Teacher's Goals/Requests for Technical Assistance

- Planning Strategies at all four benchmarks-7
- Planning time-2
- Planning curriculum
- Planning for small groups and individual children-2
- Curriculum ideas for experiences related to standards
- Individual support from I.C.
- Training in observation/documentation
- Support for assistant teacher in intentional teaching-2
- Support in implementing the project approach
- Hands-on work in the standards
- Where to put strategies on planning form
- How to fill out Learning Experience Plan form
- Ongoing training in intentional teaching
- Ways to exchange ideas with other teachers on a regular basis-through e-mail or a blog
- Regular communication with Michele and Julie through e-mail or a website focused on intentional teaching

Addendum D: CES Report from Paula Nizzardo

Stamford School Readiness Monitoring Report for 2010-11 Maple Avenue Head Start, Franklin Commons, CLC Room 2, and Sacred Heart Programs

To: All School Readiness Staff

From: Paula Nizzardo, Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.) Early Childhood Consultant

Date: April 19, 2011

Introduction - Fall/Spring 2010-11 Monitoring Process

The Connecticut School Readiness Program requires regular program monitoring for the purpose of determining “how the program supports children’s learning and its alignment to the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework and Benchmarks.” Classroom monitoring enables the program to not only identify strengths but also to address areas needing improvement on a regular basis. In addition, monitoring gives program staff an opportunity to develop individual classroom goals while still recognizing and acknowledging consistent classroom strengths.

In previous years, the State Department of Education’s reviewer’s form was utilized for monitoring Stamford’s Head Start and Sacred Heart programs. This monitoring tool provided an overview of the following areas: Classroom Setting, Language, Literacy, Mathematics, Science as well as Assessment/Outcomes for Children.

This year a different monitoring tool was used, one that focused specifically on the planning and implementation aspects of intentional teaching in the classroom. This monitoring tool, *Classroom Monitoring of Curriculum Planning and Implementation*, included components from last year’s form designed by Julie Coakley, C.E.S. Monitor, for the William Pitt Child Development Center, Stillmeadow, and the School Readiness classes at Maple Avenue.

In this report, a total of nine classrooms were monitored. They included: seven Head Start classrooms - Maple Avenue (five classrooms), Franklin Commons (one classroom), CLC Room 2 (one classroom) and two Sacred Heart classrooms.

The program monitor conducted a one-hour observation in each classroom using the *Classroom Monitoring Curriculum Planning and Implementation* form. Using the monitoring form, the monitor reviewed the current lesson plan for every classroom and then observed whether the lesson plan was implemented in the classroom. It should also be noted that Program Directors and Education Coordinators were provided with the monitoring report form in advance and were encouraged to share and discuss it with the staff prior to the scheduled monitoring site visit.

Upon completion of all monitoring site visits and report writing, the consultant conducted two separate meetings at Maple Avenue and Sacred Heart to review individual classroom reports with directors and educational coordinators for the determination of “next steps” technical assistance.

**Summary of Classroom Monitoring of the Cycle of Intentional Teaching
Head Start Programs: Maple Avenue, Franklin Commons, and
Palmer's Hill Childcare Learning Center - Room 2**

Introduction:

This is the fifth year that this monitor has observed and reported on Stamford's Head Start programs. This year's focus was on planning and implementation in order to determine how the Head Start programs were progressing in the area of intentional teaching and to plan for technical assistance that would strengthen their understanding and alignment of the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Standards to Head Start's Standards.

The Report is divided into sixteen sub-categories, each identifying a specific area related to planning and implementation. In every classroom report, the monitor also noted specific Classroom Strengths, "Next Steps", and Recommendations for future technical assistance.

Stamford Head Start Report Summary

Planning

- **Current Lesson Plan posted in the classroom:** Seven of the seven classrooms (100%)
- **Changes to the environment:** Seven of the seven classrooms (100%) *Note: Although seven classrooms indicated "changes to the environment" on their lesson plan, one classroom needed improvement in this area because the changes they listed were items that should be placed regularly in centers and made available to children all the time.*
- **Identified Performance Standards:** Zero of the seven classrooms (0%). *Note: Although Connecticut Performance Standards were not identified on lesson plans, 100% of the classrooms note standards from the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Six of the seven classrooms list one Domain, Study/Project, and Indicator. One classroom noted two Domains and Indicators on their lesson plan.*
- **Experiences/activities are developmentally appropriate and connected to the Performance Standards:** Seven of the seven classrooms (100%) provided developmentally appropriate experiences/activities and although experiences/activities were not connected to performance standards, they were connected to *Head Start Child Outcomes Framework*.
- **At least three experiences are planned across centers and across the daily schedule for each standard:** Seven of the seven classrooms (100%) connected at least three experiences across centers and across the daily schedule for each Head Start standard. *Note: In all classrooms, experiences are listed with limited detail on lesson plans.*
- **Lesson Plan includes a daily plan for literacy:** Seven of the seven classrooms (100%) listed a daily literacy plan that listed a variety of literacy experiences/activities. *Note: In all classrooms, daily literacy plans provide limited detail on lesson plans.*
- **A variety of teaching strategies are planned for children at different benchmarks in each standard:** Zero of the seven classrooms (0%) *Note: On the second page of the Head Start lesson plan, there is a section identifying "focus children", however, different benchmarks are not noted and the written information is limited lacking detail.*
- **The Lesson Plan reflects experiences, activities, or questions at different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy:** Zero of the seven classrooms (0%)
- **Observation/documentation of the children's work is planned:** Zero of the seven classrooms (0%)
- **There is a flow to the Lesson Plan: learning center experiences, standards, and the content you want children to learn are connected:** Three of the seven classrooms (43%) had plans that connected experiences, standards, and content to what staff wanted children to learn.

Implementation

- **The activities and experiences in the Lesson Plan are implemented in the classroom:** Six of the seven classrooms (86%)
- **The teachers engage children with CT PAF Performance Standards or Creative Curriculum Goals and Objectives in mind:** Zero of the seven classrooms (0%). *Note: 100% of the classrooms identify standards from the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, however, it was not evident that staff were engaging children with these standards in mind.*
- **The teachers implement planned strategies for both small groups and individual children at different benchmarks:** Zero of the seven classrooms (0%) *Note: Individual planning is noted on the second page of the plan. It was not evident that these strategies were being implemented during the observation.*
- **The teachers are using strategies even though they are not a part of the Lesson Plan:** Seven of the seven classrooms (100%).
- **The teachers are providing experiences and activities that are not part of the Lesson Plan:** Seven of the seven classrooms (100%)
- **There is evidence of the classroom teachers sharing information with families regarding intentional teaching:** Two of the seven classrooms (29%) *Note: Five classrooms indicated limited evidence of information sharing.*

Program Strengths

- All classrooms had current lesson plans posted in the classroom.
- All classrooms provided developmentally appropriate experiences/activities that were connected to *Head Start Child Outcomes Framework*.
- There were at least three experiences planned across centers and across the daily schedule related to the Head Start standards.
- 86% of the classrooms implemented the activities/experiences in the classroom.
- Staff used strategies even though they were not a part of the lesson plan.
- Teachers provided activities/experiences that were not part of the lesson plan.
- Teachers were consistently involved with the children and available for support as needed.
- Conversations were heard regularly between teachers and children and staff frequently asked a variety of questions.
- Positive Behavioral Reinforcement was regularly used especially addressing behavioral concerns through positive language strategies.
- A variety of learning centers were accessible to the children with related materials.

Next Steps:

- Identify and align the Connecticut Performance Standards with the Head Start Standards on lesson plans.
- Increase the number of identified standards that are planned for regularly.
- Provide more detail in lesson plans – include teaching strategies and how experiences and activities are connected to the identified standards (what children will be learning).
- Increase and develop Literacy Plans going beyond just listing daily experiences/activities. Provide more detail and increase the variety of literacy experiences/activities so that they include the four early literacy concepts of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- Indicate on the lesson plan teaching strategies for children at different benchmarks and implement them.
- Begin to provide evidence of Bloom's Taxonomy in the experiences/activities that you plan.
- Plan for the observation/documentation of children's work as it relates to the standards you identify on your plan.

- Make connections between learning center experiences, standards, and the content you want children to learn.
- Increase the evidence of classroom teachers sharing information with families regarding intentional teaching.

Summary of Classroom Monitoring of the Cycle of Intentional Teaching Sacred Heart Preschool Program: Pre-K 4 (Rooms 1 and 2)

Introduction:

This is the second year that this monitor has observed and reported on the Sacred Heart School Readiness classrooms. This year's focus was on planning and implementation in order to determine how the program was progressing in the area of intentional teaching and to plan for technical assistance to strengthen their understanding and implementation of the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment standards. The report is divided into sixteen sub-categories, each identifying a specific area related to planning and implementation. In both classroom reports, the monitor noted specific Classroom Strengths, "Next Steps", and Recommendations for Technical Assistance.

Planning

- **Current Lesson Plan posted in the classroom:** Two of the two classrooms (100%)
- **Changes to the environment:** One of the two (50%) *Note: One classroom needed improvement in this area because the changes they listed were items that should be placed regularly in centers and made available to children all the time.*
- **Identified Performance Standards:** Zero of the two classrooms (0%). *Note: NAEYC standards were listed on the plans for both classrooms. One classroom provided minimum detail – noting only the number and letter relating to the NAEYC standard.*
- **Experiences/activities are developmentally appropriate and connected to the Performance Standards:** One of the two classrooms (50%) *Note: activities were developmentally appropriate.* One of the two classrooms (50%) *Note: activities were connected to NAEYC standards.*
- **At least three experiences are planned across centers and across the daily schedule for each standard:** Zero of the two classrooms (0%)
- **Lesson Plan includes a daily plan for literacy:** One of the two classrooms (50%) *Note: One classroom listed literacy items but were non-specific and with no teaching strategies indicated.*
- **A variety of teaching strategies are planned for children at different benchmarks in each standard:** Zero of the two classrooms (0%)
- **The Lesson Plan reflects experiences, activities, or questions at different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy:** Zero of two classrooms (0%)
- **Observation/documentation of the children's work is planned:** Zero of two classrooms (0%)
- **There is a flow to the Lesson Plan: learning center experiences, standards, and the content you want children to learn are connected:** Zero of two classrooms (0 %) *Note: Both classrooms were identified as "needs improvement" in this area. Plans focused primarily on units of study rather than strong connections to identified standards. Experiences/activities lacked detail with minimal descriptions and with no mention of teaching strategies.*

Implementation

- **The activities and experiences in the Lesson Plan are implemented in the classroom:** Two of the two classrooms (100%)
- **The teachers engage children with CT PAF Performance Standards or Creative Curriculum Goals and Objectives in mind:** Zero of the two classrooms (0%).

- **The teachers implement planned strategies for both small groups and individual children at different benchmarks:** Zero of the two classrooms (0%)
- **The teachers are using strategies even though they are not a part of the Lesson Plan:** Two of the two classrooms (100%).
- **The teachers are providing experiences and activities that are not part of the Lesson Plan:** Two of the two classrooms (100%)
- **There is evidence of the classroom teachers sharing information with families regarding intentional teaching:** Two of the two classrooms (0%) *Note: Both classrooms indicated “needs improvement” because they had limited evidence of information sharing*

Program Strengths

- Current Lesson Plans were posted in both classrooms.
- The activities/experiences in the Lesson Plan were implemented in both classrooms.
- Teachers used strategies even though they were not part of the Lesson Plan.
- Teachers provided activities/experiences that were not part of the Lesson Plan.
- Staff was consistently and actively involved with the children.
- Positive Behavioral Reinforcement was used regularly.

Needs Improvement

- Changes to the environment.
- Identify and engage children with performance standards.
- Developmentally appropriate experiences/activities and that are connected to the performance standards.
- Plan at least three experiences across centers and the daily schedule for each standard.
- Include a daily plan for literacy.
- Plan and implement a variety of teaching strategies for children at different benchmarks in each standard.
- Reflect experiences, activities, or questions at different levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy.
- Plan for observation/documentation of the children’s work.
- Ensure that there is a flow to the Lesson Plan i.e. learning center experiences, standards and content you want children to learn are connected.
- Increase the sharing of information with families regarding intentional teaching.

Recommendations for Technical Assistance – Head Start and Sacred Heart

Both the Head Start and Sacred Heart Program require further technical assistance not only in intentional teaching but also in the understanding and implementation of the Connecticut Performance Standards. In addition to these areas, the Head Start Program needs to understand how to align the Connecticut Performance Standards with the Head Start Framework. The following list of recommendations for technical assistance has been shared with both programs and was developed to help directors and educational coordinators determine future trainings.

- **PCF/PAF Training** - Training for the teachers in the Preschool Curriculum Framework and the Preschool Assessment Framework
- **Planning Experiences & Activities for Standards** - Technical assistance for the teachers to help them to strengthen their understanding of the standards and how to plan experiences and activities aligned to the standards
- **Planning more than one experience/activity around standards** - Support and guidance for the teachers in planning more than one experience or activity aligned to a standard so that children may experience work in standards in different learning centers
- **Developing strategies for large & small groups & for individual children** - Support and guidance for the teachers in developing teaching strategies for large groups, small groups and individual children

- **Planning strategies for four Benchmarks** - Support and guidance for the teachers in planning the strategies they will use to support children at all four Benchmarks in a standard
- **Bloom's Taxonomy (understanding & planning)** - Guidance and support for the teachers in understanding Bloom's Taxonomy and planning activities at different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy
- **Implementing Standards** - Support and guidance for the teachers in engaging children with Performance Standards in mind
- **Implementing Standards for large & small groups & individuals** - Support and guidance for the teachers in implementing the planned strategies for large groups, small groups and individual children
- **Families & Intentional Teaching** - Guidance and support for the teachers in sharing information with families regarding intentional teaching

It should be noted that technical assistance has already been offered to both programs. The program monitor has held meetings at both sites to review monitoring reports and to discuss "next steps" with the Directors and Educational Coordinators. Both Bridget Fox and Michele Sabia attended both of these meetings.

Both Head Start and Sacred Heart staff were invited to attend the Spring School Readiness training at William Pitt on March 18, 2011. Maple Avenue Head Start supervisory staff, Annette Yarber-Crooks and Olga Mettelus were in attendance.

Lesson planning training was offered and provided to Sacred Heart through Michele Sabia and the monitor has reviewed and provided written feedback for lesson plans for two Sacred Heart classrooms. Sacred Heart has also been encouraged to provide a written proposal for technical assistance.

A planning meeting was held at Maple Avenue on April 14th to develop future technical assistance around "Teaching Strategies". The plan includes a half day workshop as well as follow-up meetings with each of the classrooms that would also include ongoing meetings with Olga Mettelus, Educational Coordinator.