

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting

November 10, 2009

9:00 a.m.

Mayor's Conference Room

Council members present:

Burke, Jennienne	Care to Care(Family Day Care)
Feder, Karen	Abilis
Fox, Bridget	Chair, School Readiness Council
Glenn, Sheila	ROSCCO
Hallissey, Jennifer	United Way
Morrow, Polly	Pitney Bowes/Parent Representative
Mullet, Alisha	Soundwaters
Reardon, Ellen	Stamford Museum and Nature Center
Sandahl, Margo	Instructional Coordinator, William Pitt
Short, Bob	Family Centers
Taratino, Sherry	Sacred Heart
Weller, Eva	PLTI
Zarny, Lisa	Stamford Hospital

Advisers:

Garvin-Kester, Barbara	Executive Director, CLC
Cammarota, Karen	Grants Officer, Grants Department, City of Stamford
Tarrantino, Sherry	Sacred Heart School

Guests:

Sabia, Michele	Stamford Public Schools
Fico, Karen	Stamford Public Schools
Behm, Tricia	Stamford Public Schools

I. Welcome and Announcements

Bridget began the meeting by making the following announcements:

- October 14th School Readiness Council Meeting re-cap:
 - Bridget thanked Lisa Zarny for helping to organize the event. The Council hosted an evening meeting at the William Pitt Child Development Center for parents on the topic of “The Family Table: Raising Healthy Eaters for Life” presented by nutritionist Jamieanne Patterson from Stamford Hospital. 25 parents attended. Bridget also thanked Pitney Bowes and especially Polly Morrow for supporting the effort. Without their support the event could not have happened. Bridget reported that Jamieanne Patterson was great and parents very much enjoyed the event. The materials from the event are posted on the city’s website at <http://www.cityofstamford.org/content/25/50/2454/default.aspx>.
- Care 4 Kids
 - The program has temporarily re-opened

- Legislators – make sure to communicate the importance of the program. Bridget agreed to send a letter from the Council with specific data from Stamford;
- Child First Replication Grant:
 - In Bridgeport
 - Supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
 - Early intervention mental health services
 - Family Centers and Child Guidance have expressed interest
 - Match required each year
 - Program to begin in January 2010
 - Two more communities will receive award
- Administrative Increase
 - In Implementer Bill the School Readiness Grant received an administrative increase – first in 11 years
 - Stamford has unspent dollars from unutilized slots this summer
 - Council agree to move those dollars into Admin line to support my benefits and additional \$10K to be spent on various Admin activities?
- Early Childhood Blueprint
- Thanking the Mayor from the Council?

Professional Development Registry

Bridget wanted to make sure that the Council is aware that all School Readiness providers must register their teachers into a state professional development registry which verifies each teacher's and administrator's credentials. Charter Oak is the school charged with the task of overseeing the Registry. The state is considering withholding funds from those School Readiness providers who do not register their teachers into the system until they do so.

Introductions followed.

Bridget stated that she is trying to keep the website as current as possible including minutes and agendas from each meeting and noted that Shannon, the Mayor's intern, had recently added Sacred Heart's information to the website.

II. Minutes from April and June 2009 meetings

The minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Administrators' Report

CLC: Linda reported that in June 19 School Readiness children were offered two week scholarships to a summer camp. The Horizon summer program has had middle school students come to William Pitt and administer the "Learning in a Bag" program. KMPG has also been volunteering at William Pitt.

Enrollment for June had two full day and three part day openings that were not filled. July has been quieter due to the economy, down to around 60 children. Linda was confident that in the fall the School Readiness Program will be fully enrolled.

There will be open registration at William Pitt for fall enrollment from August 4th-6th. Parent Orientation will be in three weeks.

In August there is a big section of the Advocate devoted to Education. The idea was proposed to advertise for School Readiness.

Sonja is taking a look at that and you have to advertise in order to get a story.

Caroline spoke about advertising at Story Hours at the Library.

Bright Horizons: Suzanne

Bright Horizons will not receive School Readiness funding this coming year. Eight of the 10 children have been transitioned over to School Readiness slots at CLC. The Bright Horizons site at High Ridge wants to get accredited (NAEYC) for the following year and Suzanne plans to attend Council meetings and sit on the Council as the private provider representative. The site at High Ridge has capacity for 60 preschool spaces.

Stamford Museum and Nature Center:

Ellen is running the camp at Stamford Museum so was unable to attend the meeting. SMNC was not funded for the coming year, but are also looking forward to possibly applying for School Readiness slots next year. She wanted to reiterate that if the council wants to do the Early Childhood Fair at the museum then a date needs to be chosen. It would be instead of the Cove and also free for the families. Special effort would need to be made for transportation including advertising and a ton of publicity.

It was decided that Bridget should pursue the option.

Quality Enhancement Grant:

There is still uncertainty around the Quality Enhancement funds surviving the state budget, but there was some hope that it would be revived. The application is due to the state August 1st regardless so time will tell what happens to the funding.

Jennienne shared with the Council the specifics of the grant application and the activities associated with the Quality Enhancement funding applied to the Care to Care Program of Family Centers. The following is a summary of her report:

- Care to Care administers 10 monthly trainings for family home daycare providers and kith and kin providers which include CPR, First Aid, Medication administration, Early Literacy, Home Safety, and Nutrition.
- The Annual Recognition Dinner is held each fall to recognize the efforts of the family home day care providers and kith and kin. This is an opportunity for this community, which is quite isolated, to network and socialize.

- Five sessions of “Learning in a Bag” were provided through Care to Care in conjunction with the Young Parents Program (YPP) and Family Centers. YPP is a teen parenting program that provides childcare so that the parents can finish high school.
- ROSCO had given money for mini-grants to allow providers an opportunity to update materials like basic supplies.
- Jennienne spearheaded a mentoring program between licensed providers and kith and kin providers. The licensed providers acted as mentors to the informal providers to help them create a nurturing and educational environment.

Bridget asked for a vote from the Council to approve the grant (for \$82, 398) and the Council voted unanimously to do so.

Bridget asked everyone to review the revised School Readiness Council policies that she provided to Council members. She noted that the Council will review the policies and approve several at the September meeting.

CSRPPES update: Self evaluation report is due every August and there is a community and provider component. Bridget has copies of the reports for the community.

IV. Discovery Grant Community Self-Assessment

Sonja Ahuja, Graustein Memorial Fund:

All communities who receive Discovery grant funding need to complete a self assessment annually. Tool has been developed since 2001 and is an early attempt to make the assessment more concrete so that the items are not as abstract or generalized as in the previous instrument. Two parts to the process: individual assessment and then group discussion. Sonja then explained the differences between each of the indicators and the levels.

Everyone participated in the exercise and discussed the results.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.