

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting
Wednesday, January 9, 2013
9:00 a.m.
Literacy Volunteers, 141 Franklin Street

Council Members Present:

Brennan, Karen	United Way of Western Connecticut
Burke, Jennienne Peoples	Care to Care (Family Centers)
Cook, Lucia	Literacy Volunteers–Stamford/Greenwich
D’Luc, Imelda	Head Start/Childcare Learning Centers
Hallsisey, Jennifer (Chair)	United Way of Western Connecticut
Lapine, Jennifer	Past School Readiness Council Chair
Mullett, Alisha	SoundWaters
Reardon, Ellen	Stamford Museum and Nature Center
Rigano, Sue	Stamford Public Education Foundation
Sabia, Michele	Stamford Public Schools
Walker, Dori	Stamford Public Schools
Ward, Caroline	Ferguson Library
Weller, Eva	PLTI
Wenz, Karen	First Presbyterian Nursery School

Advisors:

Cammarota, Karen	Grants Department, City of Stamford
Garvin-Kester, Barbara	Childcare Learning Centers
Sargent, Carol	William Pitt Child Development Center
Tarantino, Sherry	Sacred Heart School

Guests:

Arcuri, Donna	School Readiness Liaison, City of Stamford
Swan, Ellen	Early Childhood Consultation Partnership
Tabb, Mary	University of Connecticut

I. Welcome & Introductions

Jennifer Hallsisey welcomed everyone and thanked Lucia Cook and the staff from Literacy Volunteers, for hosting today’s meeting. Karen Cammarota and Jennifer then introduced our new School Readiness Liaison, Donna Arcuri. Donna has been working as a consultant to the Mayor for the last year and has unofficially begun immersing herself into the School Readiness work. An official announcement will be made soon.

II. Approval of Minutes from December 2012 Meeting

The Council unanimously approved the minutes from the December meeting.

III. Council Announcements

- Barbara Garvin-Kester asked the Council to support CLC's application to the State for its Bond grant. Funds would be used to help with capital improvements at the Maple Avenue site (the Kindergarten wing needs to be finished for much needed classroom space it is currently office space). There is strong interest amongst Council members that we position Stamford to take on additional School Readiness slots. We have had to say no to the State because of space limitations. It was strongly stated that if CLC were to apply, we would want to see expansion to allow for more students, not just capital building improvements and better space for existing students and teachers. It was also stressed that the current playground space issues would also need to be addressed, as these are no adequate. Sacred Heart will also be applying for funding, as they need monies to improve their new school site, the former Waterside School location. The school was built for school age students and improvements need to be made for the safety of the younger children. The Council voted in favor of CLC and Sacred Heart applying for funding.
- Jennifer updated the Council on an RFP received from the Junior League of Stamford-Norwalk. They have distributed this widely to community partners and are interested in projects in the area of school readiness and/or childhood literacy. Jennifer, Sue Rigano from the Stamford Public Education Foundation, and Michele Sabia from Stamford Public Schools met with the Stamford Public Schools grants office to discuss the opportunity. The group identified family literacy as an important project and a follow up meeting will take place after the School Readiness meeting with representatives from Literacy Volunteers, Adult Education, and the Ferguson Library. Council members are invited to participate. Jennifer will follow up with the Council via e-mail with next steps and outcomes.
- The Executive Committee is making progress with its strategic planning and will be ready to have a strategic planning discussion in February. Council members present indicated they could allow for an extra hour for the February 13 meeting.

IV. New Business

- Mary Tabb, Human Development & Family Studies Lecturer/Coordinator ECDE at UConn, joined us to provide an overview of the early childhood teacher credential (ECTC) requirements. There has been a great deal of confusion around the new requirements—who they apply to, when they take effect, etc. One issue Mary clarified was that a “teacher” is any person with primary responsibility of the classroom of children. Therefore, teacher aides/assistants, floaters, etc. will not be required to get the ECTC, although some may choose to for professional development. Please see Mary's PDF handout for detailed information.
- Meeting addendum: Mary followed up with Deb Adams for answers to the questions we identified during the meeting. Her answers are included here. Mary also shared that the State Department of Education, the Connecticut Association for Human Services, and the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance will be hosting forums throughout Connecticut for Early Childhood Teachers to learn more about the Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) and to answer any questions. A flyer for a forum in Norwalk on March 14 was sent to the Council electronically.

Has this legislation been fully passed or will that be addressed in this upcoming session? *The initial legislation was passed in 2011 with Public Act 11-54 addressing the Bachelor and Associate degree percentages for 2015 and 2020. In 2012, Public Act 12-50 tweaked the 2011 legislation to include scholarship and adjust the grandfathering clause. All legislation was passed and is now in effect. The document attached are the official guidelines for publically funded programs.*

In addition the CCAC dollars for individual scholarship (\$5000), where will money for application fees or requirements exceeding the \$5000 cap materialize? Will it be up to individual ECE Programs? *The cost for the Individual Review will mostly be paid for out of state dollars. There will be a fee (looks like it will be \$50 instead of \$75) that the individual would pay for the application for the Individual Review process. There is no cost to applying for the ECTC once the person has been validated through the approved college route or the Individual Route. We are seeking sources to help people pay the \$50 fee.*

How are programs expected to meet the salary expectations for teachers who receive the ECTC when they are currently struggling within these economic times? *The legislation does not address compensation. The Workforce Workgroup of the Cabinet is working with a national learning table to investigate compensation across the nation so we can be informed about how to proceed on the issue.*

For teachers who attended college out of state (i.e. Westchester Co, NY), will their BA +12 credits in ECE be considered for the Grandfather Clause? For new hires within this circumstance, we understand they would go through the portfolio process to receive their ECTC, but would current teachers in their position qualify?

The grandfathering clause addresses anyone with a BA + 12 credits in a position after July 1, 2015. People can move around now and hire people meeting the current requirements. After July 1 2015, only those with a BA + 12 credits are grandfathered IF they remain in their position. Anyone leaving their organization after that date and applies for a teacher position in a state funded program must meet the new requirements. They would go through the Individual Review process. This is why we think lots of people will apply for the Individual Review process in the coming year so that they have the verification (the ECTC) that they meet the new requirements and they then can move anywhere.

- Discussion of resources and needs following the tragedy in Sandy Hook: Jennifer shared that the United Way of Western Connecticut has received upwards of \$6 million for the fund established for Sandy Hook. We know that many of our partner organizations are continuing to provide services to families in Newtown and in surrounding towns. Council members offered brief descriptions of how the tragedy is affecting their schools and organizations.
- Imelda D'Luc from Childcare Learning Centers' Head Start program shared copies of their 2013 Community Assessment survey with the Council and asked for people to complete these and return to her. She thanked everyone for their time.

V. Regular Reports

- Reports from Sacred Heart and CLC for December were sent to the Council in advance of the meeting and are included here as Addendums.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

**The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 13 at
SoundWaters, Cove Island Park.**

Addendum A: Childcare Learning Centers Report, December 2012

- Program Utilization
 - a. Authorized Capacity – Full Day – 334; Part Day – 97; Extended Day – 113 = 544
 - b. Ages: 3 year olds – 195; 4 year olds – 346; 5 year olds- 0
 - c. Children with disabilities = 22 with IEP
0 without IEP
 - d. Notes and Trends:

- Program Attendance:
 - a. 99% of enrollment
 - b. Notes and trends

- Staffing
 - Open Positions-
 - a. Head Teacher- Cluster A, Assistant Teacher- Cluster A, Head Teacher- Cluster B, Assistant Teacher- Cluster C, Head Teacher – Cluster C (new), Assistant Teacher- Cluster D, Head Teacher- Cluster F, Assistant Teacher – Cluster F
 - b. Recruitment – ad on-line, local newspapers, postings at NCC, Craig’s list
Notes and Trends – We continue to have a difficult time finding staff with a Bachelor’s degree with 36 credits in ECE.

- Training:
 - a. December 4 – Kitchen Studio Training- Victoria Pittman Green and Nutrition Staff
 - b. December 7 – Staff Development Day- “Observation/Documentation” – Julie Coakley and Suzanne Clement
 - c. December 13 – Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Training for several administrative staff. William Pitt received two machines, one for each floor. CLC received 11 machines for the entire program..
 - d. December 20 – “Read Aloud/Bloom’s Taxonomy” – Dr. Debbie Schreiner and Dori Walker

- Special Events/Activities:
 - Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children.
 - Scholastic Book Fair- December 10-14 – Raised \$465.00 for Literacy materials.
 - Lunch and Learn- “How to Handle those Difficult Questions Children Ask” - presented by Lorenzo Colon-Munroe – Focus was on violent events in response to the Sandy Hook incident. – December 18
 - Parent Advisory Council – December 18th
 - Field trips to Stamford High Preschool Lab – December 13th – Cluster C, December 7th and 11th- Cluster B
 - Practiced Lock Down procedures – December 19th- went smoothly with exception of children on playground- need more practice getting them to a safe place quicker.

Addendum B: Sacred Heart Report, December 2012

Program Utilization:

- School Day – School Year – 47 Students
- Pre – K 3 Class – 17
- Pre – K 4 Class #1-15
- Pre – K 4 Class #2-15
- All 26 School Readiness slots are full.

Program Attendance:

- Children – 80% colds, stomach flu, bronchitis, ear infections, high temperatures
- Staff – 90% colds, flu, stomach flu - Difficult staffing month
- School closed – Holiday vacation 12/24/12 – 1/1/13
- School reopened – 1/2/13

Staffing:

- No staffing changes

Activities & Events:

- Director, Sherry Tarantino received an upgraded CDC (CT Directors' Credential) to a "Standard" Certificate from Charter Oak State College.
- Director, Sherry Tarantino attended a Principal's Meeting at the Diocese of Bridgeport to receive further i-pad training on how to download and use educational app's.
- Children's Holiday Celebration Show and reception at 9:30am for Parents. We hosted approx. 120 friends and family members for this special event.
- Diocese began series of checklist's & survey's regarding school security.
- Tightened up our security policies regarding lockdown and emergency evacuation.
- Responded to Mayor Pavia's SurveyMonkey regarding security within our school.
- Captain William F. Mullin – Stamford Police Dept. – visited on 12/19 to introduce himself and inquire about what type of security and emergency plans we have in place.

Moving Update:

The Zoning Board has requested that we put an application in to attend a Hearing Meeting regarding our new school site. The next hearing will be in February 2013.