

School Readiness Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 24, 2014

4:00 p.m.

Room 24

Present: Barbara Wilson (Co-Chair, Board of Education), Donna Lanza (Co-Chair, Town of Hebron), Jeff Newton (Superintendent, Hebron Public Schools), Josh Martin (Special Education Director, Hebron Public Schools), Eric Brody (Principal, Gilead Hill School), Erika Kowalski (Parent Member), Jessica Peck (Parent Member), Carol Connolly (Hebron Board of Education, Liaison to School Readiness Council), Chris Lapsis, (School Readiness Teacher), Marilyn Piecuch (School Readiness Liaison), Nancy Simmons (School Readiness Clerk)

Public Comments: None

Introduction of Council Members

New 2014-2015 Grant:

(Amount awarded, QE, etc.) Barbara Wilson will send electronic copy of grant to Carol Connolly and Donna Lanza

Budget for 2014-2015:

Barbara Wilson passed out Budget (attached).

- Mrs. Wilson explained we are not in the red. Current School Readiness teacher, Chris Lapsis, does not take insurance which means we're actually positive in the School Readiness account.
- Mrs. Connolly asked if we get any additional funds from Town or Board of Education. Mrs. Wilson explained that we receive 108,000.00 for the grant. There is an additional \$4,200 (quality enhancement grant) used for paraprofessionals to further their early education credentials, and tuition income is estimated at \$25,000.
- All PreK paras will be going for early education not just SR paras.
- It should be noted that parents do not pay for snacks. There is \$1,000 which is part of the snack budget. Parents do pay for lunches unless they are part of the free/reduced lunch program. Some parents send in lunches.
- Josh Martin stated all money from grant must be spent or it has to be returned. We do not have to spend all of tuition money. We have to apply for grant every year.
- Mrs. Connolly stated that HEA Foundation has their Autumn Auction on October 16th to raise money for grants. She suggested that if there is something that is needed in the School Readiness Program we should apply for a grant through HEA. Mrs. Lanza suggested having a "Wish List" of items we might need for the SR Program.
- Mrs. Connolly would also like to approach the Board of Education for money toward School Readiness. For example, maybe we can go to Board of Education if our grant doesn't cover all expenses.
- Mrs. Connolly also suggested having a fundraiser if more money is needed.

NAEYC Update:

Mrs. Wilson stated that our NAEYC application will be submitted by the 30th of September. This is a 4-step process. Our visit will be sometime between January 31st to the last day of school. They will give us a two-week window. Barbara is working on the Program Portfolio. Teachers are working on classroom portfolios. It should be noted that there is only one School Readiness class at this time but all teachers are getting NAEYC accredited.

State's Inquiry for Grant Expansion:

Mrs. Wilson was contacted by the State (Office of Early Childhood). We have been identified as potentially adding more School Readiness spots for the 2015-2016 school year.

Regarding possible grant expansion the state would like 18 students in a School Readiness classroom. State is applying for a federal grant. It would be a 6 hour day for a 10 month period with \$16,700 per child (regular school day). This is all preliminary information at this point. Twenty school districts/towns were offered this opportunity. This grant is for 20i5-2016 school year. There will be more information and discussion to come regarding this opportunity.

It was, also, reported that two Prek families are using the PREP Program at this time. One is a School Readiness student and one is an afternoon PreK student.

Gilead Hill School's Application of Minor Capital Improvement Grant:

Because Gilead Hill School houses School Readiness, we were eligible to apply for and receive money from the Minor Capital Improvement Grant. Mr. Martin stated that his office has applied for a \$95,000 grant to use for future security upgrades (upgrading of cameras). Mr. Newton stated that current camera system is 14 years old. If grant is received it will help offset security costs.

State of Connecticut Updates:

- Marilyn Piecuch presented program for movement for children. There would be a \$1000 stipend for our school. Teachers would get training, materials, books, DVD's. Mr. Lapsis took information to review. All PreK teachers could apply.
- Regarding teachers and para certification – all have to be registered and updated. NAEYC wants public schools licensed but this is not mandatory at this time. Observers will come in do inspections to make sure building is suitable for children to be in. Public schools at this time do not have to be licensed but this may change.
- New sliding fee scale coming out for new students.
- Office of Early Childhood is doing a scientific student survey as to the growth of School Readiness children compared to other children not in the program. They're only going to look at full day SR programs (re: language/math/social -for students going into Kindergarten) . About 1600 students will be chosen (800 School Readiness students/800 not school readiness students). There was discussion if parents should sign permission forms so the state can look at specific students. First survey report due at the end of October. We will need to discuss further. We need to look at our school policy regarding this. UCONN is doing study. We will wait for more information regarding this
- Smart Start is another possible grant for low income children. State will be sending out information. Grant is for 10 years/ \$75,000 per year. At this point not sure that Hebron will get selected.

Pizza on the Playground:

Thursday, October 9th 5:30-7:00 p.m. (ribbon cutting ceremony at 6:00) will be held to celebrate the completion of the PreK Playground. Students, parents, board of education members, Mr. Tierney, teachers, and custodians will be invited. Mrs. Connolly suggested that Mr. and Mrs. Turco be invited. We received a grant from Lego that Mr. and Mrs. Turco, employees of Lego, sponsored. We will try to get current parents to help supply paper goods, etc. School Readiness will supply

pizza. Mrs. Wilson will contact Sam Schadle to see if she has any other suggestions as to who should be invited to this exciting event. We would like to thank everyone for helping to make this happen!! It should be a fun event!!

Establish School Readiness Council Dates:

Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Lapsis will forward a schedule of future School Readiness Meeting dates. Once schedule is sent out Mrs. Wilson asked that committee members inform her if certain dates are not good.

End of Meeting Comments:

- Mrs. Connolly would like Technology on future agenda for discussion.
- Question was asked regarding our current School Readiness enrollment. As of today we are currently at 17 students in our School Readiness Program . We are currently waiting for paperwork for one student so we are looking to have 18 students in the next week.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:05 p.m.