

## HEBRON SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL

April 10, 2013  
GILEAD HILL SCHOOL  
GHS Music Room  
7:00PM

Council Members: Barbara Wilson, School Readiness Liaison  
Jared Redmond, PREP Representative  
Judith Richard, Hebron Director of Special Education  
Donna Lanza, Town Hall Representative  
Marilyn Piecuch, Hebron Resident and NAEYC Consultant  
Christopher Lapsis, School Readiness teacher  
Cari Duigou, AHM Designee  
Samantha Schadtler, Parent  
Christa Goodwin-Babka, Hebron Daycare Provider (left at 7:49pm)

Council Members Absent: Becky Murray, Family Resource Center Coordinator  
Cindy Lalonde, Parent  
Eric Brody, GHS Acting Principal  
Kathryn Veronesi, Acting Superintendent  
Cheri Labombard, Douglas Library  
Polly Simon, Hebron Daycare Provider  
Ellen Kirkpatrick, School Nurse

### 1. WELCOME

Jared Redmond called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. Introductions were made.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Connolly thanked everyone on the Council and the time that they volunteer. She spoke about her son's experience in School Readiness. C. Connolly said her reason tonight for comment was to advocate for 5 years olds to stay in the program at Mr. Lapsis' discretion. She also wanted to comment on Smartboards and asked if they were wanted in the classroom. She asked if the administration would support the decision to have Smartboards in the classroom for preschool. Lastly, Mrs. Connolly commented on fundraising and that she is happy to coordinate a fundraiser such as a raffle and spoke about options such as gift cards or a trip.

Allison Lantieri spoke about the quality of the Hebron School Readiness program and the difference that she has seen personally coming from another state. She's very glad that her daughter was accepted into the Hebron program. She asked the Council to consider raising the tuition if it was possible. Mrs. Lantieri feels that an increase would be supported by the families. She also supports 5 year olds being retained if necessary.

### 3. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MINUTES

The Council reviewed the February meeting minutes due to concerns brought up by a Board of Education member. J. Richard read the email regarding the Budget topic from the February minutes. The Council

discussed the concerns raised and would like to clarify that the Board of Education only contributed to the teacher's salary and benefits when the teacher was employed as a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher. The School Readiness Grant and incoming tuition took over the responsibility once the teacher was hired for the preschool program. D. Lanza spoke about how originally the former superintendent offered that the Board would help with covering it. J. Richard stated that after the superintendent resigned, that was no longer an option and it was understood that the grant and incoming tuition would need to cover everything. The Council agreed that the February meeting minutes that were approved at the March meeting would stand and that the April discussion would serve as clarification to those minutes.

#### **REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES**

D. Lanza requested a correction to Loreta McDonnell's name in Public Comments.

D. Lanza requested on Page 2 - #4 it be changed to say "future possible cost of ongoing maintenance"

C. Lapsis motioned

M. Piecuch seconded

VOTE: 9 yea 0 nay

Motion passed

#### **4. TEACHER REPORT**

Christopher Lapsis reported that things continue to go well and that new friends are being welcomed and accepted easily. On April 22<sup>nd</sup> the beautification project will be presented. The Garden Barn in Vernon has designed the garden for us. All preschool students will be doing work in the garden. A letter will go home to the families about this project. Mr. Lapsis stated that the butterfly garden will be certified as an official butterfly sanctuary. Mr. Lapsis requested that Sam Schadtke provide information about the playground updates. S. Schadtke spoke about the grants that she has applied for. The Lion's Club are interested in donating money towards the courtyard. S. Schadtke spoke about the requirements of the Lion's Club grant. The Lego grant has been endorsed by two employees that live in Hebron so she is hoping that we have a good chance at getting that one. S. Schadtke spoke about the grant amounts that we could qualify for and the concern that if we receive this money, will there be an obstacles that might stop this project. B. Wilson said that she will speak about the project going forward with Dr. Veronesi, Mr. Durocher, and the Town of Hebron if necessary. J. Richard spoke to the importance of the collaboration that needs to happen with the Board of Education but that the School Readiness Council makes all the final decisions for the School Readiness room and retains all control over the budget money, tuition, and any money raised through fundraising. The Board of Education should be included on any decisions that would affect the school property however. Discussion regarding how money would be handled with grants continued. B. Wilson will move forward to set up an account and move forward to notify the Board of Education.

#### **5. STATE MEETING UPDATES**

B. Wilson and M. Piecuch attended the last state meeting. It was announced at that meeting that 10 new towns are eligible to apply. It is unknown how many will actually apply and be funded. The grant process was also discussed during the state meeting. B. Wilson said that the collaborative agreement must be submitted with the grant. NAEYC accreditation was talked about and what is expected. M. Piecuch stated that KinderRHAMA may qualify for funding by Charters-A-Course for NAEYC.

#### **6. ENROLLMENT UPDATE**

There are currently 15 students enrolled in the School Readiness Program with 2 additional students possibly attending in the near future. Families were notified of their remaining tuition balances due by the end of the school year.

## **7. 5% RETENTION OF KINDERGARTEN AGE ELIGIBLE STUDENTS**

B. Wilson spoke to the Board of Education policy being that 5 year olds move on to Kindergarten. She understands the parents' concerns and desire to retain but cannot support this. S. Schadtler handed out the state objectives and supporting data for retention. The Council discussed the benefits and concerns of retention. Discussion regarding how a student with an IEP would affect retention. It is a rare case that a student would need to be retained whether they are regular ed or special ed. M. Picuch stressed that the preschool program is a 3 and 4 year old curriculum. Any student 5 or older would not be receiving a 5 year old curriculum.

A motion was made that it should go to vote. S. Schadtler motioned. D. Lanza seconded with a request to continue discussion. C. Lapsis wanted to make it clear that we could be putting NAEYC Accreditation into jeopardy if we don't match the Board of Education policy. We can't be accredited with the other two preschool classrooms if our policies don't match up. This ultimately could mean that the School Readiness classroom would be disbanded.

B. Wilson asked for a vote on allowing 5% to be retained.

VOTE: 1 yea 8 nay

Motion failed.

B. Wilson asked for a motion to not allow 5% to be retained.

D. Lanza motioned

C. Lapsis seconded

VOTE: 8 yea 0 nay 1 abstained

Motion passed.

## **8. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT**

S. Schadtler wanted to know if she can apply for this grant on behalf of the preschool for playground money. Discussion by the Council regarding what the grant money for this particular grant can be used for. The Council will not be applying for it this year.

## **9. BOARD OF EDUCATION CONCERNS**

J. Richard spoke about the Board of Education concerns that came up in March. J. Richard presented on March 14<sup>th</sup> to the Board of Education. J. Richard read an email from a Board of Education member about budget and funding of School Readiness. J. Richard read her response into record. D. Lanza asked if the Board of Education is clear that School Readiness is not funding anything. J. Richard read a second email of Board of Education concerns and her response. The benefits that the Board of Education is receiving because of School Readiness are:

- Teacher's salary and benefits from date of hire to preschool position paid for by School Readiness grant; without School Readiness, Board of Education resumes cost because teacher would still be 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher.
- Special education students are in School Readiness. Board of Education would have been responsible for adding an additional half-time special education preschool teacher due to current class sizes.
- School Readiness is funding NAEYC accreditation for all three preschool classrooms
- School Readiness has purchased over \$15,000 worth of classroom furniture, instructional materials, and supplies that are now the property of Board of Education and used by all preschool classes
- School Readiness families seeking grants to fully fund preschool playground
- Research has shown a direct link to high quality preschool programs and the future success of students; thus, reducing students requiring reading intervention, math intervention, and special education

C. Lapsis hopes that the Board of Education sees the benefits of this program and understands the sharing of resources. He hopes they see that the opportunities that Hebron children are receiving are in the Board of Education's best interest.

#### **10. BUDGET REVIEW**

J. Richard spoke to the budget revisions. The Budget Narrative was distributed. The Council discussed transferring Parent Activities (\$1000), Professional Services (\$800), and the balance of Instructional Supplies (\$463) to Other Supplies by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

J. Richard motioned

C. Duigou seconded

VOTE: 8 yea 0 nay

Motion passed.

#### **11. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jennifer Custer, parent of a School Readiness student, wanted to know if late birthdays would be able to attend School Readiness until they turned 5 and then transfer out. The Council replied that the policy would be that any student age eligible to start Kindergarten would not be allowed to start in School Readiness and then transfer out. J. Custer asked if preschool follows the K-12 SRBI process. The Council replied that they do to a degree but that preschool ultimately follows the state benchmarks.

Allison Lantieri wanted to state for the record that this program is a gift to this community.

Carol Connolly said we should all attend the Board of Education meetings.

#### **12. MEETING ADJOURNED**

It was requested that a special meeting be scheduled to discuss the School Readiness grant for the 2013-2014 year. Information will be sent out to get that scheduled.

J. Redmond requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:34pm.

S. Schadle motioned

J. Richard seconded.

VOTE: 8 yea 0 nay

Respectfully Submitted:

Stephanie Levin, School Readiness Clerk