

HEBRON SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL

August 15, 2012
Gilead Hill School
Music Room
7:00pm

1. WELCOME

Judith Richard called the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Council Members Present: Judith Richard, Director of Special Education
Barbara Wilson, Speech Pathologist/School Readiness Liaison
Becky Murray, Family Resouce Center Coordinator
Liz LaChapelle, Resident/Parent
Eleanor Cruz, Superintendent
Marilyn Piecuch, Resident/NAEYC Consultant
Cindy Lalonde, Resident/Parent
Andy Tierney, Interim Town Manager (arrived at 7:15p.m.)

2. INTRODUCTIONS

J. Richard requested that introductions be made around the table.

3. DISCUSSION PER AGENDA

J. Richard opened the meeting stating that Hebron has qualified for the School Readiness Competitive Grant in the amount of \$107,000 per year. J. Richard began by providing an overview of the School Readiness program. School Readiness is controlled by the School Readiness Council which is obligated to be formed. There must be, at minimum, a parent, a town representative, and a medical representative. Gerri Rowell, state consultant for School Readiness, stated that our council looked good but needs a medical representative and that it could be our advisor or school nurse or medical professional within the town. J. Richard asked the Council what their thoughts were on having the school nurse. B. Wilson stated that she would speak with the school nurse. J. Richard also stated that we should have a Hebron daycare provider on the Council. B. Murray said she can help with that.

We must elect a chairperson no later than the October meeting.

Emails were collected to form a distribution list. All information going forward will be sent out through that list.

B. Murray stated that Joel Rosenberg from AHM Youth Services may not serve on the Council. She may represent AHM. Jared Redmond or Josselyn Salafia, the Program Coordinators for PREP, may also represent. B. Wilson will check with them both.

Cheri La Bombard won't be able to attend evening meetings. We will try to schedule some meetings during the day.

Rich Calarco may have one of his employees attend as a representative.

Kim Bowers from Hebron Interfaith may send a representative.

We need more members on the School Readiness Council. It was suggested that Polly Simon from Christ Lutheran may be interested.

Discussion continued regarding the development of policies and procedures. It was also discussed that even though this is a state funded grant that is through the school system, it is controlled by the School Readiness Council. Every meeting will have a budget update.

Windsor Locks and Hebron were the two districts that were awarded this grant. Discussion about what a competitive grant means.

J. Richard began a discussion about the budget pages within the grant. We need to hire a teacher and benefits may need to be paid. Paraprofessionals also need to be hired. We are running the School Readiness Program as a school day/school year program. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) timeline starts as soon as the first child enters the program. We will have 3 years to become accredited. The teacher will be a Hebron Board of Education employee paid by the grant. The paraprofessionals will be staggered. Deb Stipe from EASTCONN will help with accreditation. Stephanie Levin will contact her. Parent workshops and professional development for Hebron daycares and preschools need to be provided. Snacks will be provided. There was discussion regarding snacks. Income eligibility was talked about and how many spots would be available. We need to have at minimum, 11 spots for low-income families. Any remaining spots can be filled with families that pay full tuition. The property line in the grant may need to be adjusted based on the teacher that gets hired.

M. Piecuch talked about NAEYC and the process of being accredited. There are 10 standards that we must meet to be able to state that we have a high quality, NAEYC accredited preschool program. M. Piecuch will prepare a handout for the September meetings. She briefly spoke about the self-examination that will need to be done as well as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale. We would also look into expanding the accreditation process to the Kindergarten.

Program Operations were discussed. Tuition is based on Connecticut's School Readiness Program Operations PO-13-01. The program is open to all 3 and 4 year olds. Once they reach age eligibility, they are moved towards Kindergarten. The relationship between School Readiness Program and the Gilead Hill School Preschool was discussed. It was stressed that School Readiness Program is not a special education program but if a student is identified, services must be given. Program Operations PO-09-05 was reviewed.

The School Readiness Council continued the discussion regarding tuition and a student that was identified as special education. The council voted on special education students would pay half tuition. B. Wilson had questions about the amount of speech time a student might have and how that would affect the amount of tuition that the family would pay. It was decided that tuition would be paid in full for any student that was speech by appointment.

M. Piecuch brought up setting up criteria for selecting students. The Hebron Family Form was discussed. B. Wilson spoke about procedure to interview families. The School Readiness form goes in depth on helping families with other community services. The Council reviewed the two

forms. Changes were suggested and will be implemented. B. Murray stated that she is happy that this program is a gateway to getting more information about services that the town of Hebron offers. Her role in the town is to make sure that families are lead in the right direction for the services that they need.

Tuitions will be held in an account set up by the Board of Education. J. Richard will oversee the fiscal side of the grant. If a family, selected to participate in the program, fails to pay tuition in a timely fashion, we will need to contact the family and the ultimate decision of that student's continued participation in the program will be determined by the School Readiness Council. 75% or below is considered income eligible on the chart (PO-13-01). B. Wilson reviewed the financial form. She will need to meet with families to review their eligibility twice a year. Monthly tuitions rather than two times a year were suggested. E. Cruz discussed the benefits of a monthly payment. L. LaChapelle recommended a grace period. Projected policies will be drafted for the next meeting.

Future meeting times were talked about. Meetings will alternate between evening and day time meetings so that we can get a variety of attendees. All meetings will be weather permitting. The dates and times of the meetings will be sent to the Town Hall to be posted publically. A. Tierney stated that agendas should also be sent.

Interviews for the teaching position will happen soon. The closing date on the posting is August 24th, 2012. L. LaChapelle asked if the GHS preschool teachers should attend.

Family interviews will be starting shortly as well. The Council discussed it being a first come, first served.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jennifer Custer, a Hebron parent, spoke about wanting to be a part of this program. B. Wilson stated that she would be in touch with her.

5. ADJOURNMENT

J. Richard adjourned the meeting at 8:53p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Levin, School Readiness Clerk