

HEBRON SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL

December 12, 2012
GILEAD HILL SCHOOL
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER
7:00PM

Council Members Present: Judith Richard, Director of Special Education
Eric Brody, HES Assistant Principal
Donna Lanza, Town Hall Representative
Christopher Lapsis, School Readiness teacher
Becky Murray, Family Resource Center Coordinator
Marilyn Piecuch, Hebron Resident and NAEYC Consultant
Barbara Wilson, School Readiness Liaison
Cindy Lalonde, Parent

Council Members Absent: Liz LaChapelle, PTA President/Parent
Cheri Labombard, Douglas Library
Eleanor Cruz, Superintendent of Schools
Polly Simon, Hebron Daycare Provider
Kathryn Veronesi, Principal Gilead Hill School
Jared Redmond, AHM/PREP
Christa Goodwin-Babka, Hebron Daycare Provider
Ellen Kirkpatrick, School Nurse

1. WELCOME

Judith Richard called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

J. Richard introduced Eric Brody who will be the Principal at Gilead Hill School as of December 17th. All members introduced themselves.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Connolly, a parent and founding member of the Hebron Ed Foundation, spoke. Both her children attend Hebron Public Schools. She thanked the council for their work. She had the opportunity to sit in on the School Readiness classroom and what she experienced far exceeded her expectations and commended C. Lapsis on the great job he is doing. Her child is a student in the class and loves school for which Mrs. Connolly is thankful for. She stated that her goal is for the Council to ensure that the tuition payments that the families pay go directly to the teacher.

J. Richard addressed Mrs. Connolly's statements.

4. SCHOOL READINESS POLICY DEVELOPMENT

J. Richard wanted to start the discussion with a concern brought forward by D. Lanza regarding the selection of the chairperson. J. Richard contact Gerri Rowell, the School Readiness contact at the state as well as Andrew Tierney at the town. It was decided that Mr. Tierney would nominate J. Redmond to be the town representative co-chairperson. B. Wilson will continue as the co-chairperson representing to Board of Education. J. Richard will step away from the position and will participate as a member of the Council and work on the Policy Subcommittee. J. Richard thanked D. Lanza for bringing this to the Council's attention.

J. Richard continued the discussion regarding the development of policies. At a previous meeting, the Council requested that S. Levin put together a draft document of policies that the Council has discussed. J. Richard spoke to how the Council needs build their policies in conjunction with the state's policies. J. Richard suggested that by creating a Policy Subcommittee it will allow the work to be done and then presented to the Council as a whole for approval. J. Richard and M. Piecuch will be on this subcommittee. J. Richard stated that they would work on one policy at this time and bring it to the Council at a future meeting to show how the process would go.

5. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES

J. Richard requested that the Council review the minutes and asked if there were any changes. None were made. J. Richard called for a motion to approved.

D. Lanza motioned to approve the November minutes.

M. Piecuch seconded.

Unanimously approved.

6. STATE MEETING UPDATES

B. Wilson reported that the most recent regional meeting was cancelled but is rescheduled for January. She reviewed her notes from the November meeting. B. Wilson stated that there was much discussion regarding the Quality Enhancement Grant which Hebron did not apply for this year. We were one of four districts that did not. There was also discussion regarding a new Request for Proposal at the state level. This RFP is regarding bond funds for wiring which would allow money to be transferred to town quicker. There are some specifications for applying for this such as a lease and she was not sure if it would apply to us. During the meeting, they also wanted to make sure that each Council held discussion regarding a "hardship clause". B. Wilson reported that Gerri Rowell was planning to attend the meeting that happened in late November regarding the new teacher evaluation system and if and how it would apply to School Readiness or Preschool teachers. No firm decisions had been made yet. Standardized assessments are not offered routinely to students in Preschool thru 2nd grade. Further discussion regarding higher education/colleges offering their students the opportunity to be NAEYC certified before graduation happened. There was also discussion regarding the grandfathering of current teachers into the Early Childhood Teacher Certificate if they have already met the requirements.

7. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

B. Wilson reported on our current enrollment which is holding at 12. She has been in contact recently with a few families and we expect that within the next month we will be welcoming at least one new friend.

8. 2013-2014 PROGRAM ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURE

The Council had a discussion on how the students will be chosen for next year's class. The 3 year olds that are currently in the program will automatically continue on into next year. Any student that is currently 4 and turning 5 before December 31, 2013, will be Kindergarten eligible and not be able to continue on in our program. B. Wilson reported that parents have been asking how students will be chosen (Lottery? First come, first served?). The question was put forward could we only offer open spots to 3 year olds to ensure that we won't have a high turnover every year. The council believes that this would be discriminatory. M.

Piecuch said we could do an open enrollment period as other districts have done. B. Wilson said it should be considered that we run it at the same time as the GHS Preschool Lottery. A lottery process was favored. C. Lapsis voiced concern regarding logistics of doing a lottery for half day vs full day and how that would be handled. J. Richard stated that we should do the lottery in June and we have time to figure out the details of how it would work with the GHS Preschool lottery.

9. NAEYC

M. Piecuch spoke regarding the policies and how they will work through the NAEYC Accreditation. J. Richard spoke about our work with Deb Stipe from Eastconn. The administrative team will work with Ms. Stipe on January 3rd. We have also booked days with Ms. Stipe through the remainder of the school year for her to work with both the administration and the Preschool staff. J. Richard went over what will be covered at those meetings.

10. TEACHER REPORT

C. Lapsis reported that everything continues to go well in the classroom. Currently, the district is in the middle of conference week and he is hearing a lot of praise from the parents about the program and how their children are doing. Mr. Lapsis is also hearing from fellow staff members how impressed they are with the students. There are comments of how well behaved they are going down the hall considering the age group and how well they have fit right into the GHS community like they have been here all along.

J. Richard asked again about interest regarding the St. Jude Trike-A-Thon. She encouraged the Council to consider coming up with a date and start thinking about the details of how we could make this work. C. Lapsis and M. Piecuch both spoke about their experience as a parent and as a teacher involved with an event like this.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

C. Connolly spoke regarding the lottery process and suggested that children of teachers within the school district should have first shot at open slots within the program. Mrs. Connolly also volunteered her time to help coordinate the St. Jude Trike-A-Thon or any event that would be put on. She also voiced her concerns on the budget and on how the tuition collected is spent.

12. MEETING ADJOURNED

J. Richard requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.
B. Wilson motioned.
D. Lanza seconded.
Unanimously approved.

The next School Readiness Council Meeting will be held on January 9th at 12:30 p.m. in the GHS Activity Room.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01pm

Respectfully Submitted:
Stephanie Levin, School Readiness Clerk