

HEBRON SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL

October 17, 2012
GILEAD HILL SCHOOL
MUSIC ROOM
7:00pm

Council Members Present: Jared Redmond, AHM/PREP
Christopher Lapsis, School Readiness teacher
Laurie Larson, AHM Representative
Judith Richard, Director of Special Education
Kathryn Veronesi, Principal Gilead Hill School
Eleanor Cruz, Superintendent of Schools
Barbara Wilson, School Readiness Liaison
Cindy Lalonde, Parent
Donna Lanza, Town Hall Representative

Council Members Absent: Becky Murray, Family Resource Center Coordinator
Ellen Kirkpatrick, School Nurse
Liz LaChapelle, PTA Co-President/Parent
Polly Simon, Hebron Daycare Provider
Christa Goodwin-Babka, Hebron Daycare Provider
Marilyn Piecuch, Hebron Resident and NAEYC Consultant

1. WELCOME

Judith Richard called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

All Members introduced themselves. Laurie Larson came as a representative for Becky Murray. Donna Lanza came as a representative of Town Hall.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Samantha Schadtler spoke about how happy her child is when he comes home from the program. She thanked Chris Lapsis and commented that he has done a wonderful job.

Carol Connolly spoke about how delighted she is and how exciting it is to have this opportunity. She said that she was nervous before it started but the program has exceeded her expectations. She hopes that the Council will consider spending some of the budget on sending Mr. Lapsis to workshops.

J. Richard responded that the budget would be reviewed later in the meeting.

4. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER MINUTES

D. Lanza requested that number 8 Chairperson Nominations be changed to Judy and Barbara being nominated as co-chairs. D. Lanza also requested that number 9 Transportation have an added line that no transportation would be provided.

D. Lanza motioned to approve the September minutes with those changes.

J. Richard seconded.

Unanimously approved.

5. CHAIRPERSON APPOINTMENT

Stephanie Levin, School Readiness Clerk, read the emailed nominations received from the School Readiness Council members. J. Richard and B. Wilson were appointed Co-Chairs.

6. STATE MEETING UPDATES

B. Wilson reported on the School Readiness state meetings that she has attended. The meetings have focused helping districts on getting the program up and running. B. Wilson stated that Deb Stipe from Eastconn will help Hebron with the Charts-A-Course as well as the process for NAEYC accreditation. Ms. Stipe will be meeting with her on either November 28th or December 6th to start the self-study and formally declaring for accreditation. The preschool team will begin working on a preschool program portfolio as well as individual classroom portfolios. An annual report will also need to be prepared. During the October 9th Professional Development day, the preschool team worked on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) self-study. Marilyn Piecuch assisted with this process.

B. Wilson said that at the state meetings there have also been useful discussions regarding naps, snacks, and substitute teachers. Mrs. Wilson said that she is getting positive feedback from the state about the procedures that Hebron already has in place.

B. Wilson reported about the Quality Enhancement Grant. This is a grant that is in addition to the School Readiness Grant that is typically used to make building improvements, add technology, etc. We did not apply for this \$4,000 grant this year but we may apply next year.

B. Wilson continued to report on another topic that has been spoken about at the state meetings. As a Council, the General Policies and the Program Operations need to be reviewed and changes should be made to make them more specific to Hebron. Discussion regarding the review and communication about possible changes ensued. D. Lanza questioned the legality of any discussion happening through email. E. Cruz suggested having a sub-committee to review the General Policies and Program Operations. J. Richard stated that most districts do have a sub-committee. J. Richard also said that some changes have already been discussed in the Council meetings and have been documented through our minutes such as tuition for any Special Education identified students. J. Richard asked everyone on the Council to review the policies and operations for the next meeting.

B. Wilson distributed copies of a new policy (GP-09-09) that the state handed out.

J. Richard spoke about the report that the district is required to submit every month. This will be completed by S. Levin and B. Wilson.

7. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

B. Wilson reported that at the last meeting we had 8 students ready to enroll into the program. As of this meeting, there are 12 students attending the School Readiness Program. There are 6 reduced income slots still available that we need to fill. B. Wilson is still hearing chatter around town about the program but the calls have slowed down.

8. FLYER INFORMATION

J. Richard presented the new updated flyer for the program. J. Richard asked everyone to review and make any suggestions on information that should be added and ideas on where and how to distribute.

D. Lanza suggested that we add that the program is located at Gilead Hill School. E. Cruz suggested putting it on the website, sending it to the PTA and request that they add it to the social media site that they use, and emailing it through E-Notify.

The Council continued discussion regarding where it should be distributed publically. Suggestions were Hebron pediatricians, PREP, Town Hall, school newsletter.

9. NAEYC UPDATE

J. Richard stated that Polly Simon and Christa Goodwin-Babka have been very helpful especially in the last meeting regarding snacks. Also professional development was discussed. Deb Stipe will be paid out of that for her help with the NAEYC accreditation process. Hebron daycare providers will be invited to attend any professional development that we have. M. Piecuch came on October 9th and helped with the ECERS.

10. BUDGET REVIEW

J. Richard spoke about the budget. The Property line will hopefully help with getting Smartboards into the preschool classrooms. We will need to transfer funds to cover some of the purchasing that needed to be done for the new classroom. The Parent Activities line can be used for parent nights or open houses or parent trainings. This might be a great way to spread the word about the program. D. Lanza asked if benefits were included in the teacher salary line. J. Richard confirmed that Employee Benefits were a separate line item and that both the salary and benefits line would not completely cover the teacher so it was typical for districts to pick up that difference. E. Cruz confirmed that any shortage will be picked up by the LEA. J. Richard stated that the tuition payments from parents would go towards those two lines as well.

11. TEACHER REPORT

Chris Lapsis shared a slideshow of the pictures that he has taken since the program started a week ago. This slideshow ran during the meeting. C. Lapsis reports that the students are transitioning very well. There have been a few hiccups but that is to be expected with a new program and everything is running pretty smoothly now. The students are getting into a routine. E. Cruz stated that there appears to be a lot of coordination and collaboration with the existing preschool team at GHS. C. Lapsis reports that he was welcomed into the Pre-K circle. The team has been very excited to help with the program. Mr. Lapsis will attend the Preschool Meetings and this will assist on getting the School Readiness Program up to the same point in the curriculum as the existing preschool program. Mr. Lapsis spoke about the marking periods for the School Readiness Program. For the first marking period that is closing in November, he will be scheduling conferences with parents to discuss their child's transition and progress in class. There will not be a report card sent. For the following two marking periods, there will be report cards sent home. K. Veronesi clarified for the Council and audience members that the Preschool Meetings that C. Lapsis spoke about were held on Wednesdays. This is a time that not just the preschool teachers meet but also other collaborating staff members such as OT, PT, and Speech.

12. OTHER

J. Redmond spoke about possible taking in School Readiness children. The morning PREP has some availability and they open at 6:45am. At this time the afternoon PREP is at capacity and

would need to expand their space if they took in more students. J. Richard distributed the PREP tuition schedule. PREP does not have a sliding scale fee system.

D. Lanza stated that the librarian does want to be involved but could not attend this evenings meeting due to a prior commitment.

13. PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Connolly requested a copy of the budget. J. Richard stated we would look into that. Mrs. Connolly stated that she is pleased that the tuition payments would be going towards the salary line. She feels strongly that we should do whatever it takes to keep such a highly qualified teacher in that position. She also wanted to make sure that the Professional Development money was used for our teachers. J. Richard confirmed that it will definitely be used for our teacher but that we can also invite daycare providers as our community outreach.

Samantha Schadtler asked if the NAEYC accreditation would actually take the 3 years that we are given to attain it. J. Richard confirmed it will definitely take that amount of time. B. Wilson reiterated that Deb Stipe will be working with us on that process and that we will get it done in 3 years. Mrs. Schadtler also asked to have the flyer emailed to her and she would be happy to send it along to her co-workers at Region 8.

14. Meeting adjourned

K. Veronesi motioned to close the meeting.

E. Cruz seconded.

Unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm

The next School Readiness Council Meeting will be held on November 14th at 12:30p.m. in the GHS Activity Room.

Respectfully Submitted:
Stephanie Levin, School Readiness Clerk