

Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative (TECC) Education Workgroup Meeting Minutes

Meeting held on April 20, 2015. Meeting Called to Order at 12:08p.m. by Cheryl Kloczko, Workgroup Co-Chair. Minutes from our last meeting were reviewed and approved as printed.

In Attendance: Elaine Hanscom/TECC, Donna Labbe/TECC & Torrington Public Schools (TPS), Cheryl Kloczko/TPS, Carmella Galipault/Head Start, Paula Romanelli/Head Start, Judy Courtot/EDUCATION CONNECTION, Cindy Guerreri/William Casper Graustein Memorial Foundation (WCGMF), Patrice Nelson, CT Center for School Change, Dawn Markelon/Torrington School, Kaitlin Marchand/Southwest School, Mary Cecchinato/Torrington Child Care Center, Lucille Fines/Vogel-Wetmore School, Eileen Smedick/Vogel-Wetmore School, Susan Fergusson/East School, Teresa Allen/Girl Scouts of CT, Carol Quartiero/Kids Play Museum, Charlene Lee/Brooker Memorial, Cindy Marchell/Forbes, Elizabeth Rhoades/Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, Paula Gajewski/Community Family Learning Center

Items Discussed:

Kids Play Family Event-

- Presentation made by guest Carol Quartiero, member of Kids Play Children's Museum Board of Directors, detailing the activities from their recent Family Fun Fair held at the Warner Marine Studio facility. Kids Play is interested in a partnership with TECC for this event for next year, to include an educational component for parents, possibly including activities from the Kindergarten readiness fair. This will be put on a future meeting agenda for further discussion.

School Readiness (SR) Updates-

- Quality Enhancement Funds may be available for fiscal year 2015-2016. TECC needs to indicate on the grant application if the funds will be used for professional development programs or to offer scholarships to early childhood professionals to assist in attaining higher degrees in early childhood education. TECC has used these funds as they became available for the past few years to provide scholarships. Motion passed to use any quality enhancement funds received in the next fiscal year for scholarships to pay for classes in early childhood education, to aid in meeting the more stringent SR requirements on child care providers in regards to advanced degrees, after discussion about funding availability and control over programming. (10 Yes votes, 0 No votes & 3 abstentions noted)
- No new sites applied for local SR funds. An ad hoc small group reviewed SR site proposals for next year and reached consensus that all three sites meet the criteria to be used as a site for Torrington. Motion passed to move forward with the SR grant application using these three sites: Head Start, Hilltop Christian Early Learning Center, and Torrington Child Care Center. (11 Yes votes, 0 No votes & 3 abstentions noted)
- Update on Federal Preschool Expansion Grant for new slots for children turning 4 years old by January 1, 2016, to be up and running in September 2015- Torrington Public Schools will run, and is proposing East School as the site. These slots are for families in Torrington that are at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

There will be 47 expanded full day full year slots with no fee to the parents. Also included in this grant are 23 improved preschool slots moving from half day to full day at the existing school readiness sites, and improving teachers' salary. Discussion today was about the differences between these slots and the current SR slots. The draft application form was distributed to the group. A question raised today was what is the role of TECC in oversight to this grant? The response was very similar to the SR grant oversight done currently. It was suggested that an ad hoc group meet regarding the enrollment and referral process.

Birth to 8 Community Plan Implementation-

- **Early Literacy Grant-**
Community Family Literacy Center is partnering with the Kids Play museum and the Warner Theater to provide several six week programs for more than 30 families through June 2015. A future goal would be to broaden the reach of the center, separate from the public school system. The question was raised if there was a way to track over time the difference in family engagement in the school system as a result of programs at the center. This may need further discussion.
- **Summer Learning Loss Follow Up-**
Today the group focused on the following questions:
Does anything need to be added or clarified on the summer learning notes and spreadsheet?
Does anything stand out from the items on the spreadsheet and what does this imply or mean?
The group verbally filled in information that was missing from the spreadsheet. This will be compiled and entered into TECC's Results Scorecard software. All present were asked to complete what info they could remaining in the spreadsheet and forward to Donna Labbe by May 1st to be compiled for next month's meeting.
The Ready, Set, Go program will not be run this summer. Information about data collected from the past Ready, Set, Go programs held will be presented at the next workgroup meeting.
- **Governor's Budget Correction & Update-**
The CT Alliance for Early Childhood has a small advocacy group meeting weekly during the legislative session. Mary Cecchinato is the TECC representative at those meetings. No word yet if the Community Plans line item has been added back to the budget by the Appropriations Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10p.m. Next Education Workgroup meeting scheduled for May 11, 2015 and agenda will include developing actions to address summer learning loss.

Respectfully submitted by Elaine Hanscom, TECC Secretary.