

**CITY OF NORWALK
EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 10, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Betsy Bain, Chair; Linda Wilock, Youth Service Director; Maria Senteio, NEON Child Development; George Hensinger, NECC/CT Parent Power; Jeanne Taylor Hard, parent; Evelyn Balamaci, CT-DSS; Ligia Masilamani, FCA; Rovitta Paul, Children's Playhouse; Lynn Sadlon, Fox Run FRC; Dr. Sally Grose, NCF; Adele Gordon, Norwalk Smiles; Joan Parris, NCC; Shari Konn-Andreade, 2-1-1; Curtis Law, NHA; Paula Trujillo, FRC Fox Run parent; Mary Peniston, NPS; Victoria Schilling, NHFC; Cathy DeCesare, UW Coastal Ffld Cty.; Mary Budrawich, NPS

STAFF: Barbara Smart, NECC; Rosalie Witt, NECC

OTHERS: Susan Arnold, Side by Side School

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Bain called the meeting to order at 9:40 p.m. A quorum was not present.

GRAUSTEIN MEMORIAL FUND ASSESSMENT TOOL

Ms. Sonia Ahuja came forward and greeted everyone. She said that there was a document that was distributed which was an "Indicator For Success" worksheet and this tool had been used by 54 towns in the State. Over the past eight years, 49 communities had formed the basis for the development of this self-evaluation. She said that that Fund was very interested in a community making decision process.

Dr. Grose asked if the questions should be considered in light of the entire Early Childhood Council or if they should be considered in light of one's individual perceptions. Ms. Ahuja said that there was a collaborative body in the Council and the evaluation should reflect how the collaborative body was functioning.

Mr. Law joined the meeting at 9:45 p.m. A quorum was now present.

Ms. Bain explained that a quorum was now present and that the Council would return to the agenda for the action items.

APPROVAL OF THE MAY MINUTES

**** DR. GROSE MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 2009 MEETING**

The following corrections were noted:

Page 2, paragraph 2, line 1: please change “Ms. Thorne” to “Ms. Thorme”

Page 2, paragraph 2 under Quality Enhancement Grant: please change “Professional Development for the providers will be held” to “Professional Development for the Program Committee will be held”

Page 3, paragraph 2, line 3: please change the following: “released their report.” To “release their AFP for next year’s funding cycle.”

Page 3, paragraph 3, line 1, please change the following: “Ms. Peniston said that Norwalk was one” to “Ms. Peniston said that Early Childhood was one”

Page 3, under **Graustein Memorial Fund**, paragraph 1, line 6: please change “remaining funding from the previous position be used for the positions.” To “remaining funding used to support the Early Childhood Analyst and Planner”

Page 3, **MOTION**: please change the following motion from:

**** MR. LAW MOVED TO APPROVE THE COUNCIL’S
AUTHORIZATION TO PROPOSED THE REMAINING 2008
GRAUSTEIN FUNDING FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE 2009-2010
PARENT EDUCATION PART TIME POSITION.**

TO

**** MR. LAW MOVED TO APPROVE THE COUNCIL’S
AUTHORIZATION TO PROPOSED THE REMAINING 2008
GRAUSTEIN FUNDING FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE 2009-2010 EARLY
CHILDHOOD ANALYST AND PLANNER.**

Page 5, paragraph 4, line 10: please change the following from: “students that demonstrate rarely demonstrate the desirable behavior” to “students that rarely demonstrate the desirable behavior”

Page 6, paragraph 2, line 5: please change:

“The discussion then moved to the role of the Family Resource Center and the biggest impact of the FRC’s appear to be with the parents who have less than a high school education”

to:

“The discussion then moved to the role of the Family Resource Center and Lynn Sadlon pointed out that we have the 2008 statewide survey of parents conducted by Holt, Wexler and Farnum that showed, among other things, that parents who had not completed high school had the most significant gains in Parent knowledge. She also said that this is one of the Action Plan’s target audiences.”

Concerns were expressed that perhaps a page had been lost in the transmission of the minutes.

**** MS. SADLON MOVED TABLE MINUTES TO NEXT MEETING DUE TO POSSIBLE MISSING PAGE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

UPDATES – GRANTS

Motion to approve By-laws and Policy

**** MR. LAW MOVED TO APPROVE THE BYLAWS AS PRESENTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

School Readiness Grant

Quality Enhancement Grant

Ms. Wilock announced that there were no significant updates regarding the grants.

GOOD NEWS

Ms. Sadlon said that the news that she had received was not good news. She then announced that the Governor had decided to cut the FRCs completely from the budget. She then asked the Early Childhood Council to contact their local legislators and the State regarding the following points:

Governor Jodi Rell
Speaker of the House Representative Christopher Donovan
Senator Robert Duff
Senator Toni Boucher
Representative Larry Cafero

City of Norwalk
Early Childhood Council
Regular Meeting
June 10, 2009
Page 3

Representative Terrie Wood
Representative Bruce Morris
Representative Peggy Reeves
Representative Chris Perone

We the undersigned urge you to fund \$6,041,488 annually to the Department of Education budget for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 to fund the 62 city and town Family Resource Center Programs. Family Resource Centers promote systems of family support and child development services in public schools, including:

- affordable childcare for Connecticut workers that supports Connecticut's business
- preschool and early literacy programs working towards closing our state's Achievement Gap and preparing our children to enter Kindergarten eager to learn
- affordable before and after school programs providing children with learning opportunities in a safe environment
- parent education and support programs, such as Parents As Teachers, Raising Readers Parents Clubs, Family Literacy and Adult Education
- helping families access important services such as HUSKY and Charter Oak insurance, Birth to Three and other programs.

[Ms. Sadlon needed the petition back at this point]

Mr. Hensinger said that the Care For Kids had been closed for new applicants two weeks ago and that the amount was lowered, which will affect 552 families. The Early Childhood Alliance is asking people to contact the Governor and appropriate legislators.

Ms. Sadlon then listed a number of effects that this would have on Norwalk residents including six or seven jobs, and loss of child care for other families.

****MS. SADLON MOVED THAT THE COUNCIL CONTACT THE FOLLOWING LEGISLATORS:**

GOVERNOR JODI RELL, OFFICE OF POLICY MANAGEMENT ROBERT GENUARIO, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER DONOVAN, SENATOR ROBERT DUFF, SENATOR TONI BOUCHER, REPRESENTATIVE LARRY CAFERO, REPRESENTATIVE TERRIE WOOD. REPRESENTATIVE BRUCE MORRIS, REPRESENTATIVE PEGGY REEVES, AND REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS PERONE

REGARDING THE DECISION BY THE GOVERNOR TO CLOSE THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS AND EXPRESS THE COUNCIL SUPPORT OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCILS SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER VIA A LETTER.

A discussion then followed about the Governor's proposed cuts. It was pointed out that when approaching the State Legislators that it would be good to let the legislators know what areas should be reduced rather than just requesting that they restore the funding for a particular program.

****THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOURTEEN IN FAVOR, AND ONE ABSTENTION (BAIN).**

Ms. Sadlon will draft a letter for Ms. Bain.

GRAUSTEIN MEMORIAL FUND ASSESSMENT TOOL CONT'D

Ms. Ahuja explained how everyone should score their assessment tool sheets. Ms. Ahuja then guided the group through discussion on the various topics and rating the various areas.

Under the **COLLABORATION** heading:

Broad and Inclusive Collaboration scored a 3; Engaged Collaborative Group scored 3; Strategic Use of Data scored a 2; and Governance with working Committees scored 3.

Under **PARENT AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP** heading:

Parent Leadership and Engagement scored 3; Support of the Mayor scored a 2; Support of the Superintendent scored a 2; Strong (Chair) Collaborative Leadership scored 4; Engaged Collaborative Agent scored 3; and Community Chairperson or Spokesperson scored a 3.

Under **STAFF SUPPORT/LOCAL MATCH** heading:

Strong and Skilled Facilitator scored 4; Coordination Hours – this item needs to have some notes due to the Council configuration and Meaningful Local Match scored a 3.

Ms. Ahuja said that the group was out of time and suggested that other areas should be noted for future discussion. Ms. Budrawich said that it was unfortunate that the Council did not have an opportunity to discuss the Staff Support issues with all the current cutbacks. Ms. Paul commented that the impact of losing the Care for Kids would strongly impact the families.

Ms. Bain said that it would be important to reflect on how far the Council has come in this area. She thanked the members of the Council for the efforts that were made in this

area. She said that she was looking forward to seeing everyone in the fall and to continue to work with everyone in the fall.

Ms. Ahuja said that the Graustein Fund facilitators were being trained in RBA and that there were special technical assistance funding to help with data assistance analysis.

OTHER UPDATES

There were no additional updates at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Bain said that some committees had established meeting dates over the summer in order to be prepared for the fall. Norwalk has benefited a great deal for having an Action Plan and prioritizing and addressing the various issues.

The Program Committee will be meeting on July 14th from 9-3 at NCC Rm West 248.

The Data Committee will meet next Tuesday 10-12 in A-300

Norwalk Healthy Families will meet on June 23rd from 9:30-11:30. There is a possibility that the meeting may be changed to June 30th.

Ms. Peniston asked the Council to thank Ms. Bain for all her hard work this past year. She also thanked Ms. Wilock, whose position has been reduced from full time to part time.

Mr. Hensinger said that in the beginning when the discussion was about quality, originally there was an idea to develop a Norwalk Quality Rating system, but this was deferred to the State. He said that with the changes in the State budget and planning, Norwalk should go ahead with their own plans and not wait for the State in terms of developing a Quality Committee.

Ms. Shari Konn-Andreade announced that her job location has been moved to Rocky Hill due to budget cuts.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Bain adjourned the meeting at 11:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Norwalk
Early Childhood Council
Regular Meeting
June 10, 2009
Page 6