

Middletown School Readiness Council
12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.
Wednesday, May 14, 2014
Wilbert Snow School
299 Wadsworth St.
Middletown, CT 06457

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 TOWN CLERK
 MIDDLETOWN, CONN.

Members Present: Alice Torres, Christine Fahey, Sheila Daniels, Wendy Berlind, Monica Beylea, Jim Gaudreau, Marla Hinz, Ann Perzan, Beverly Lawrence, Susan Sienkiewicz, Jerome Long, Kitty Robinson, Amy Waterman, Donna Marino, Izzi Greenberg and Christine O'Grady. Also present: Ellen Janae and Cindy Guerreri.

I. Welcome & Call to Order: Co-Chair Alice Torres called the meeting to order at 12:15 P.M. thanking those present. She informed the Council that co-chair Ed Bonilla will not be present at today's meeting. Alice shared the official news of Chris Fahey's departure as she prepares to retire June 20th. She acknowledged and thanked Chris for her role, professionally and personally, working on behalf of children not only in Middletown, but throughout Middlesex County and the entire state. Jim Gaudreau circulated the retirement party flyer and invited the Council members to attend. Chris responded that she enjoyed working in this capacity and with so many good people. Introductions were made.

II. Announcements: Donna and Christine announced that the PLTI graduation will be held on June 12th and that invitations are forthcoming. Alice announced an upcoming event - ACES PreK - 3rd Grade Symposium for District Leaders will be held June 26th at SCSU.

III. Acceptance of the April 9, 2014 School Readiness Council meeting minutes - Donna Marino moved to accept the minutes of the April 9th School Readiness Council meeting. Ann Perzan seconded. The motion carried unanimously with thanks.

IV. Financial Report: was distributed, showing no significant changes. It was noted that the grant will be spent down by the end of June. Discussion followed.

V. Coordinator's Report:

Monthly Report: Summary Report: was distributed reflecting updates and showing little movement in the categories. Parent fees have been substantial this year, all of the children have health insurance and the majority of the children we serve are from low income households.

Annual School Readiness Allocation Proposal: Chris thanked the Grants Committee members for all of their hard work. This is a mid-year update, however the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) instructed coordinators to put out a RFP in an effort to fill the 1,000 new slots proposed by the governor. We did have one program that showed interest. St. John Paul Preschool is going to open a second classroom at St. Pius Church, however they decided not to apply because of the non-sectarian program requirement.

	Spaces Allocated	Amount Allocated	Space Expansion Proposal	Expansion Cost	Allocation and Proposal Cost
Middletown Public Schools	60 part day	\$270,000			\$270,000
SmartEarly Learning Center	50 full day	\$417,300			\$417,300

South Farms Nursery School	18 full day	\$150,228			\$150,228
Town and Country Early Learning Center	56 full day	\$467,376			\$467,376
Y.M.C.A.	51 full day	\$425,646			\$425,646
	27 school day	\$162,000	6 school day	\$36,000	198,000
TOTAL	262 spaces	\$1,892,550	6 spaces	\$36,000	1,928,550

The proposal reflects current allocations and one proposed allocation for next year. There are no changes from this year's allocation, except for the YMCA classroom at Bielefield which has requested six additional school day/school year spaces. Bielefield is a focus school and we are an Alliance District, so we expect that these additional new spaces will be awarded. The award letter is expected from the Office of Early Childhood in June. Full day, full year budgets currently submitted will have to be adjusted to reflect the new rates. Discussion followed. Izzi Greenberg moved to adopt the proposal as outlined. Wendy Berling seconded. The motion carried unanimously with thanks again to the Grants Committee for all of their diligent work.

Annual Review of School Readiness Policies: A revised policy document was distributed and reviewed. It was noted on page 11 that we received a new set of guidelines around membership in response to conflict of interest issues. This also brought about a directive to have by-laws added to the new policies. We will have to develop bylaws and adopt them over the next year. It was suggested that the Council develop a bylaw committee. The new bylaws may have to be submitted with next year's grant. Other coordinators are very willing to share their community's by-laws. Wendy Berling moved to accept the updated policies as outlined. Monica Belyea seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Legislative Update: The CT Voices for Children legislative budget summary on early childhood care and education was distributed and reviewed. It includes additional preschool spaces, funds for start-up costs, School Readiness rate increases, and a Care-4-Kids rate increase. Quality Enhancement funds will stay the same locally, but funds will be available to develop a Quality Rating and Information System (QRIS). The "Smart Start" proposal was described. This is a partnership grant that will be matched with local funds. There will be a year of planning for a competitive RFP. Care4Kids is moving over to the Office of Early Childhood July 1st. It was suggested that we invite Harriet Feldlaufer to a Council meeting next year to share our ideas about changes we would like to see to the Care4kids program. There was a discussion around the kindergarten entry eligibility proposal. The Office of Early Childhood is charged with developing a plan for changes to the eligibility age by June 2015. A summary document from the Early Childhood Alliance outlining the early care items that passed in this session was distributed. It was noted that it has taken 20 years of advocating for early care and education, but people are listening and supporting early childhood bills. Two bills failed - chronic absence and nutrition in child care settings.

Early Head Start (EHS) Update: Alice reported that the sequestration restoration will allow four additional children into the program for this year bringing their total to 60 slots and they will work to restore additional slots for 2015. The national competitive grant will be out soon for increasing quality of child care slots. By July there may be some re-competition for programs in CT.

Even Start Update: Currently has one opening and still does not have a facilitator. June 11th is the graduation for the Adult Education program including six Even Start students.

Head Start Update: The new unit manager, Marla Hinz, introduced herself. Alice welcomed her to the Council.

Opportunity Knocks Update: Monica announced that the Gilead House sponsored community conversation on mental health will be held May 15th at Wesleyan. Opportunity Knocks is working on the Safe School Healthy Students early childhood logic model.

Child First Update: Christine O'Grady reported that they have 30 cases with 20 on the wait list. They could easily add an additional team. The program was inadvertently underfunded in the proposed state budget. They have worked with Dante Bartolomeo and Beth Bye to return \$80,000 to the program. Many thanks to both of those senators! Christine will find out the cost of adding another team.

Family Resource Center (FRC) Update: Amy reported that the "Kick Start" program will take place once again this summer at Macdonough and Farm Hill School for incoming kindergarten children. She noted that scholarships will be available. Wesleyan volunteers will be assisting and a certified teacher from each school is going to teach this program. Amy is going to try to provide bus passes or work with other parents to arrange carpooling for those that have a transportation challenge. Amy is excited about this program which will run from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. with breakfast and lunch provided. She is also trying to develop support for family child care providers.

Discovery Report: Cindy reported that the Discovery Grant award letters will go out between the end of June and beginning of July. Additional Discovery funds may become available to communities.

VI. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:44 P.M. with thanks to those in attendance.

The next Middletown School Readiness Council meeting will be held on

Monday, June 9th, 2014

at

Wilbert Snow School

299 Wadsworth St., Middletown, CT 06457

from

12:00 P.M. to 1:30 P.M.

**Please note -
the meeting date change**

Respectfully Submitted by:
Sheila C. Daniels

