

## **Middletown School Readiness Council**

12:00 P.M. – 1:30 P.M.

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

State Capitol Building

Hartford, CT

**Members Present:** Betsy Morgan, Christine Fahey, Maureen Partyka, Lisa Ellis, Stephen Gaarder, Ed Bonilla, Beverly Lawrence, Donna Marino, Alice Torres, Wendy Berlind, Kitty Robinson, and Alice Ellovich. Also present were Catherine Bradshaw and Early Head Start staff members Becky Cuevas, Cindy Smernoff, and Cathy Hayden.

**I. Welcome & Call to Order:** Betsy Morgan opened the meeting at 12:10 P.M. welcoming all those present. Introductions were made.

**II. Early Head Start:** Staff members introduced themselves and shared their role in the program: Alice Torres, Early Head Start Director; Becky Cuevas, Family Development Specialist/Enrollment Coordinator; Cindy Smernoff, Early Education and Disability Specialist; and Cathy Hayden, Clinical Supervisor / Mental Health Consultant. Materials were distributed: Open House flyer, family recruitment postcards, a summary of the award announcement, and diagrams of the partnership model and Area One delivery system. Alice Torres gave an update on the program. The Lois Rho EHS Family Center at Hall House has opened, staff have moved in, and a full-time secretary is there. The hospital has renovated space for the home visiting staff who are in the process of being hired. Other staff positions were announced: Carol Passeralli, Health and Wellness Specialist; Sharon Redman, Reflective Practice Specialist; Monica Belyea, Nutrition Consultant; and Cindy Bettancourt, Secretary. Everyone was invited to the Early Head Start Open House on Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M. at EHS headquarters on Hunting Hill Avenue.

**III. Minutes of March 24, 2010 School Readiness Meeting:** Wendy Berlind moved for acceptance of the minutes for the above mentioned date. Donna Marino seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**IV. Announcements:** Betsy circulated a flyer for “Traces of the Trade” on Thursday, May 6, 2010 at Middlesex Community College from 5:00 – 7:30 P.M., a flyer for “The Nation’s Challenge: Children in the Economic Downturn” by Marion Wright Edelman in the Old Judiciary Room of the Capitol on April 30, 2010 at 1:30 P.M., and a flyer for the Middlesex Coalition for Children and Middlesex United Way’s Mother’s Day / Father’s Day Diaper Appeal. Donna Marino circulated a flyer for a forum on “Easing Transitions” with Psychologist Shelley Pelletier on April 26, 2010 at 6:30 P.M. at Woodrow Wilson Middle School and a bookmark detailing the One Book community activities for “The Soloist”. Alice Ellovich circulated a flyer on “Circle of Security Parenting Training” to be held from June 21-24, 2010 at Albertus Magnus College. Chris Fahey announced the activities for the Week of the Young Child”, circulated M.E.C.N. workshop flyers (“Introducing CT’s Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning” on May 10, 2010, “Literacy Throughout the Day” on May 18, 2010, “A Two Part Workshop on Special Education Issues” on May 27, 2010, and “Developing Scientific Experiences and Language Development in the Preschool” on June 7, 2010), a flyer about Kindergarten Information

Night and Kindergarten registration, a Save the Date for C.H.D.I.’s forum “Children’s Health: Vision for the Future”, and the Spring 2010 newsletter “All Children Considered”.

**V. Financial Report:** A financial report was distributed and discussed.

**VI. Coordinator’s Report:**

**Accreditation update:** The Y.M.C.A. Phelps Ingersol Center for Children achieved N.A.E.Y.C. accreditation. The Council extends them their congratulations.

**Allocation proposal:** Chris thanked the Grants Committee (Ed Bonilla, Bob Rosenbaum, Tina Gomes, Maureen Partyka, Sheila Daniels, and Wendy Berling) for their thorough review of the RFP updates for FY 2011. The State Dept. of Education recently instructed communities to propose an allocation plan to distribute funds for the same total amount as FY 2009-10. The Grants Committee made the following recommendation for 2010-11 allocations of School Readiness funds:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Spaces Requested</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>	<b>Spaces Allocated</b>	<b>Amount Allocated</b>
Middletown Public Schools	60 part day	\$270,000	60 part day	\$270,000
Middlesex College	27 school day	\$162,000	27 school day	\$162,000
South Farms Nursery School	17 full day	\$141,882	16 full day	\$133,536
Town and Country Early Learning Center	100 full day	\$834,600	89 full day	\$742,794
Y.M.C.A.	53 full day	\$442,338	44 full day	\$367,224
Administrative				\$100,000
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>1,775,554</b>

Discussion followed. Steve Gaarder moved to accept the Grants Committee’s allocation proposal. Wendy Berling seconded. The Council unanimously approved.

**Quality Enhancement:** A proposal for spending the 2010-11 Quality Enhancement funds was distributed:

<u>ACES Promoting Partnerships To Effect Program Improvements</u>	\$9,025
<u>Family Resource Center Kith and Kin Project</u>	\$3,201
<u>Middletown Early Childhood Network</u>	\$19,783
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$32,009</b>

Discussion followed. Ed Bonilla moved to approve the proposal. Kitty Robinson seconded. The Council unanimously approved.

**State Budget:** A discussion was held about the status of various programs affecting children and families in the state budget. We need to continue to advocate for no cuts to these programs. Betsy noted that Middlesex county legislators have done an outstanding job of listening and responding to our

concerns this session. Continue to stay in touch with them as the session winds down and the budget for FY 2011 is resolved.

**Teacher Credentials** – There is a bill addressing teacher credentials that provides more direct alignment with N.A.E.Y.C. standards and a professional development plan for any centers NOT meeting the 50/50 requirement by 2015. We are still waiting for the actual amendment language.

**Care4kids** – The Children in the Recession bill includes a longer period before re-determination and a required notification by D.S.S. prior to closing the program. The length of both periods is still being negotiated.

**Discovery:** We have not yet received our grant award letter, but have heard from the Graustein Memorial Fund that Middletown was awarded a \$25,000 grant and given a set of contingencies to meet by the fall, at which time an additional \$25,000 will be awarded if the contingencies are satisfactorily met. There will be a thorough discussion of the contingencies and a decision will be made about how we will proceed at the May meeting.

Steve Gaarder volunteered to attend the Performance Measures and Accountability Institute with Chris and Betsy on May 11<sup>th</sup>, June 14<sup>th</sup>, and July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Council members should contact Chris if they would like to attend. She will register everyone for these technical assistance sessions.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 P.M. with thanks to all in attendance

The next meeting of the School Readiness Council  
will take place on  
**Wednesday, May 19, 2010**  
at  
Wilbert Snow Elementary School  
from  
12:00 P.M. to 1:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted by: Sheila Daniels