

Middletown School Readiness Council

1:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

299 Wadsworth St.

Middletown, CT

Members Present: Betsy Morgan, Christine Fahey, Sheila Daniels, Christine O’Grady, Monica Belyea, Bill Boyd, Steve Gaarder, Maureen Partyka, Wendy Berlind, Jerome Long, Beverly Lawrence, Krystal Ndukwu, Alice Ellovich and Cindy Cappetta. Also present: Colleen Schmelter, Early Head Start

I. Welcome & Call to Order: Betsy Morgan opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. Introductions were made.

II. Announcements: Monica Belyea announced that Middlesex Hospital is offering a booster seat workshop and give-away on June 8th. Cindy Cappetta shared news of a funding alert that Even Start received reflecting no funding for FY2011-2012. She asked Council members to please write letters of support for the Even Start program and send the letters to our state representatives’ and senators’ home offices by May 28th. Krystal Ndukwu circulated a flyer for an upcoming event, “Celebrate Me Cultural Bazaar”, at the AME Zion Church on June 19th with a rain date of June 27th. Chris Fahey made several announcements including: CHDI 10 year celebration on June 15th from 4:00 – 7:30 P.M. at Wesleyan University, LEARN in Old Lyme is sponsoring a workshop; “Diagnosing Infants & Young Children Using DC: 0-3R” on Wednesday, May 26th; and, on May 26th from 10:00 – 11:30 at the State Capitol, the CT Early Childhood Alliance will be presenting Children’s Champions Awards to Sen. Tom Gaffey, Sen. Paul Doyle, Rep. Gail Hamm and Rep. Matt Lesser. The Special Champion Award will go to Chris Donovan this year for his work on the Children in the Recession bill. Beverly Lawrence distributed a flyer announcing the June 9th CT Parent Power meeting to be held at Russell Library. Betsy Morgan announced that the United Way Diaper Drive met its goal of 50,000 diapers being donated!

III. Acceptance of Minutes from the April 21st School Readiness Council Meeting: Wendy Berlind moved to accept the minutes from the above mentioned date. Steve Gaarder seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Financial Statement: was distributed. It was noted that the spend-down is on target and that the unearned funds will be spent on administrative expenses.

V. Coordinator’s Report: Early Head Start Update: The Open House at the new Early Head Start for Middlesex County at 425 Hunting Hill Ave. was held earlier in the morning and was a very celebratory event! The Council is excited to have ACES operating this program in Middletown and Middlesex country.

Born Learning Trail was installed in the front of Snow School on April 24th in celebration of the Week of the Young Child. Council members were invited to see it on their way out of the meeting.

School Readiness and Quality Enhancement Grants are complete and ready for submission on Thursday. The State Dept. of Education asked applicants to include a one page submission on what they

could do if additional funding were available. Middletown is able to add 20 additional full day full year preschool spaces on July 1st if funding were available.

United Way donation earmarked for the School Readiness Council in the amount of \$104 for the next year was made during their annual campaign.

State Budget Adjustments FY 2011 Budget and Legislation: The Teacher Credentials Bill did not pass. The Children in Recession Bill passed and under this bill DSS will have to give a 30 day notice before closing the Care4Kids program. In addition, the re-application process has gone from 6 to 8 months and in the future may advance to 10 months. Family Resource Center funding is up to \$97,000 from its current level of \$92,000, but it was noted the needed funding was \$102,000.

Public Hearings on Closing the Achievement Gap: a handout was distributed to the Council. The six hearings will be presided over by a commission created by Gov. Rell. Early Childhood advocates need to have their voices heard and let the commission know the importance of high-quality early childhood education as one of the most important strategies for closing the achievement gap.

Opportunity Knocks: Monica noted that a grant application was submitted to the Aetna Foundation. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 25th when Mary Farnsworth will give an update on the mobile dental program. The Infant Feeding and Oral Health committees will be meeting in the next week. Middlesex Hospital is currently working on replacing Monica and Susan. Maureen Partyka praised Monica's work with parents at Macdonough School around good nutrition.

Discovery Grant: A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding from David Nee was distributed. This letter outlined additional information and clarifications needed to be eligible for an additional \$25,000 in the coming year. The Foundation is looking for a clear chain of command with one early childhood collaborative group for oversight. Much discussion followed around these requests. Further deliberations will take place at the next School Readiness Council meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 P.M. with thanks to all in attendance.

The next meeting of the School Readiness Council
will take place on

Wednesday, June 16th, 2010

at

Wilbert Snow Elementary School

from

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

Respectfully Submitted by: Sheila Daniels