



All New Haven children, birth through 8 are healthy, safe, thriving in nurturing families and prepared to be successful lifelong learners.

**Meeting Notes
Wednesday, November 5, 2014**

- Announcements – Tina Mannarino reported that she, Damaris Rau and Magdalena Rosales-Alban attended the bidders conference for the Smart Start Grants. She noted that one of the requirements for application is the local School Readiness Council's support and approval.
- Approval of October meeting notes – Bob Windom made a motion to approve; seconded by Xia Feng. Unanimous approval.
- School Readiness Report – Denise Duclos passed out the report of current SR openings by location, and the list of programs noting where there are open spaces. She will prepare a list of only the programs with open spaces and it will be posted on the website and sent to all NHECC members so they can forward it on to their contacts. There are currently 52 open slots. Since last month's meeting the list of open slots has been more widely distributed. The Magnet School office sent letters to families of 700 3-year olds and 800 4-year olds that were on their waiting list. Denise has received a large number of calls from these families. In accordance with their contract, programs must send their plan for filling open seats over the next month.

Tina Mannarino noted that the greatest number of open slots is at Wexler-Grant and that this is a very poor neighborhood; parents cannot afford the fees. There was discussion about the parent fees for SR programs. The Council can decide to waive fees for part-day slots but not for school day or full-day slots. Programs can decide to reduce the fee for a family that cannot afford the (sliding scale set by the State) fee, on an individual basis. In order to do so, the program must have a policy in place and must document the process. Gladys Deutsch pointed out that programs are not fully reimbursed for the cost of the SR slots and the family fee does not fill that gap. Reducing or waiving the family fee is not affordable for programs. It was suggested that the topic of fees be brought up at a future meeting.

Denise noted that a few years ago the Council purchased and put out lawn signs about SR openings in the neighborhoods where programs had openings. This was very successful. A request for funds to make these signs can be brought to the December Council meeting for approval.

Action Alert to Sign Letter to Extend MIECHV Funding – A motion was made by Sue Logston, and seconded by Janet Alfano, to sign onto the letter as forwarded by the CT Early Childhood Alliance. Motion carried unanimously.

- Discussion – Selection of Priorities for Council Work – Cyd Oppenheimer presented the results from the survey that was sent out to NHECC members to communicate their support for the Council's priorities for the work it will be doing for the next 18 months. In summary:



- There are five priorities that the survey data showed considerable support for; two of these priorities reflect work that is already underway through our PreK to Grade 3 Committee, a partnership between the Council and New Haven Public Schools.
- The other three priorities are:
 - #1 Provide support to programs to use relationship-based and developmentally appropriate practices including trauma-informed care, literacy and numeracy.
 - #2 Create a unified, easy system to navigate the Preschool enrollment system.
 - #3 Work focused on infants and toddlers and their families (this issue needs further discussion to determine the specific work that Council will undertake).

For Priorities #1 and #2, the next step is to form Committees and develop Action Plans that outline specific strategies the Committees will undertake over the next 18 months. Action planning will include any refinement of the priority statement that the Committee wants to suggest. These two Committees will report their proposed Plans at the December 3 Council meeting. Action Plan templates should include Family Engagement, Data Collection and Advocacy.

The Committee that is formed to work on Priority #3, Infant and Toddler issues, is charged with looking at the challenges that families face and preparing a proposal for its scope of work for Council endorsement at the December 3 NHECC meeting. Action Planning for #3 will take place after the December Council meeting.

It was suggested that moving forward with action planning not be focused on the current committee names and structure, but rather the focus of the work in each priority.

Gail will propose some dates and times and sent the information out via email with Doodle polls. A response to the Doodle poll will indicate intention to participate with the committee that is working on that particular priority. If someone wants to participate in the work on a priority but cannot make the proposed dates, they will note it on the Doodle poll or email Gail and let her know. NHECC members and others are welcome to work on more than one priority.

Next NHECC Meeting – Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 3:00
New Member Orientation – Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 2:00