****

**NORTHEAST EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL**

**Monday April 29, 2019**

**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

**Plainfield Early Childhood Center**

**In Attendance:** Myra Ambrogi, Jill Bourbeau, Noveline Beltram, Patty Bryant, Patricia Buell, Rena Cadro, Kristine Cicchetti, Mary Calorio, Amy Favreau, Christine Gosselin, Shannon Haney, William Hull, MaryEllen Jones, Jennie Kapszukiewicz, Tom Kohl, Gail Lanza, Tammy Miner, Bill Nagel, Emily Ross, David Siezemore, Sally Sherman, Melanie Smith*-*Cervera, Melinda Smith, Barbara Teatreault, Rene Toper, Mark Weaver

Guests: Gussie Gilberti (Plainfield), Melanie Rovero (EASTCONN)

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Guest Speaker: Rene Toper
3. Approval of last meeting minutes
4. School Readiness Updates
5. Parents As Teachers Update
6. Regional Director Update
7. Regional Programing / Community Updates

Meeting called to order at 5:38 followed by welcome and introductions.

Guest Speaker: Rene Toper is parent and a member of the several local collaboratives: Communities Raising Children, Medical Home and Family engagement team. She is the founder of Wonderland at Lions Park (playground for all abilities), she holds several certificates in AAC and most important she is an ADVOCATE and champion for her child and other children.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication, also known as AAC, is a term that is used to describe various methods of communication that can help people who are unable to use verbal speech to communicate. AAC can benefit a wide range of individuals, from a beginning communicator to a more sophisticated communicator who generates their own messages.

Rene explains that the impact of not being able to communicate effectively can lead to: increased frustration levels, increased in negative behaviors, child perceived as “acting out” or having “tantrums”, child’s needs not getting met, isolation, very few meaningful relationships, desire to communicate decreased, stays at a “toddler” level communicator, may not be able to access education, get a meaningful job, tell someone if they are hurt, not feeling well or IF SOMEONE HAS HURT THEM!!!!

Just like learning to speak, using a communicator needs to be taught through modeling, curriculum with trained communication partners, consultants to help family and school teams, instruction opportunities, etc.

***By 18 months, babies have heard 4,380 hours of spoken language and we don’t expect them to be fluent yet. Yet, if AAC users only see symbols modeled for communication twice weekly for 20-30 minutes, it will take 84 years for them to have the same exposure to aided language as 18 month old has to spoken language.***
All Children Have a Right to Communicate. How can you help?

* Educate the educators
* Influence policy and meet with Legislators
* Use a collaborative approach with other towns to support individuals, families, and educational institutions
* Identify and utilize training opportunities and organizations that can help
* Bring training and support to our area

For more information, please contact: rtoper74@gmail.com, 860-230-0196

**Last Meeting Minutes:**

Motion to approve minutes by Tammy Miner, seconded by Jeannie Kapszukiewicz – no discussion, all in favor.

**School Readiness Grants:**

Kris reviews the council membership list and voting members are highlighted in yellow, present at the meeting and eligible to vote: Myra Ambrogi – Plainfield, Noveline Beltram – Thompson, Patty Bryant – Putnam, Patricia Buell - Brooklyn, Rena Cadro – Plainfield, William Hull – Putnam, Jennie Kapszukiewicz - Killingly, Gail Lanza-Sterling, Tammy Miner – Plainfield, Bill Nagel – Plainfield, Christine Rosati – Killingly, Sally Sherman – Killingly, Melinda Smith – Thompson, Barbara Tetreault – Plainfield.

Scoring Summary Sheet is reviewed and discussed. Change on the sheet (scoring for Plainfield is 112/125 not 113/125 and scoring for Sterling 104/125 not 103/125). Tammy makes a motion to approve below SR Grants, The motion is seconded by Noveline Beltram.

Voting:

* Brooklyn grant proposal: The motion passes unanimously with Patty Buell abstaining.
* Killingly grant proposal: The motion passes unanimously with Sally Sherman, Chris Rosati & Jennie Kapszukiewicz abstaining.
* Plainfield grant proposal: The motion passes unanimously with Rena Cadro, Tammy Miner, Bill Nagel, Barbara Tetreault & Myra Ambrogi abstaining.
* Putnam grant proposal: The motion passes unanimously with Patty Bryant & Bill Hull abstaining.
* Sterling grant proposal: The motion passes unanimously with Gail Lanza abstaining.
* Thompson grant proposal: The motion passes unanimously with Melinda Smith and Noveline Beltram abstaining.

Discussion on Thompson St. Jospeh’s SR grant proposal: NECC Chair needs to get some further clarification from OEC re: accreditation - Bill will make some phone calls. Motion made by Tammy to accept grant proposal based on the OK from OEC and recommendations from reader panel re: monitoring of the program to address concerns, seconded by Rena Cadro. The motion passes unanimously with Noveline Beltram, Melinda Smith abstaining.

**Quality Enhancement Grants:** Correction on notes from last meeting, the amount for each town is $3,881 not $3,381. Programs shared at Leadership meeting how they would be spending the money next year. Motion to approve the QE Grants made by Myra Ambrogi and seconded by Chris Rosati - All in favor, no opposed, no abstentions.

**Monitoring Visits Update**: SR Liaisons give updates: Putnam and Plainfield were recently done. Putnam is fine, was monitored on April 10th, just a few miner things (collect paystubs). Plainfield completed today – all set. Shepard Hill – made some steps on actions from last time – some are partially completed – progress in right direction. There are still a few recommendations, however, Principal will be taking oversight and will help with fragmentation. Will be meeting with Melanie to streamline. Sterling’s final visit will be May 10th, Killingly on June 12th. All programs have been visited 3 times.

**NECC Meeting Calendar:** Krissy Reviews the draft calendar with group. Meetings will be held on the 3rd Monday (except January and May). Towns will host as follows:

Monday, September 16th in Putnam: Room TBD
*New member meeting where we invite town reps, legislators, local child care providers, new parents, etc.*

Monday, November 18th: Brooklyn - Board of Education

Monday, January 27th: (4th Monday) - Killingly Central Office

Monday, March 16th - Thompson - Mary Fisher Elementary January

Monday, April 27th (4th Monday) - Plainfield Early Childhood Center

*Ideas for Guest Speakers: EMPS: 211, NDDH – Linda Colangelo – Future Speakers*

* **Krissy to reach out to potential guest speakers for November and January**

**Regional Directors Update:**

Attendance Task Force held forum on 4/9/19 – 34 school personal from our 6 town attended. Feedback was that the event was a success, task force will meet to review surveys and plan next steps.

Equity Grant: Held two day training for 20 school personal on social justice and equity. Waiting for survey’s back from trainers - initial feedback from people was that the training was excellent. Grant will also pay for some follow-up ½ day trainings. Will hold those in the fall.

Award presented to co-chair William Hull as he is retiring. Council thanks him for his work with the Council.

**Regional Programing/Community Updates:**

Tom from Lions: March 30th and 31st held Food Drive - 900 lbs of food, $447 cash donations were received. Shaved head on 4/27 for Cancer research - $27,000 was raised in total.

Patty from Putnam: NAYAC Accreditation – visit sometime soon.

YMCA: Catalog for summer – please take.

Myra from Plainfield: Partnered with Health Quest and NDDH for Walk “when is your 10 program” – new initiate. Kids will get bear and journal.

June 8th – Hearing and Vision (QVCC)

Motion to adjourn: 6:47 p.m. by Chris, Seconded by Tammy