

# West Hartford School Readiness Council

## Meeting Minutes from February 26, 2018

The West Hartford School Readiness Council meeting on 2/26/18 took place at Charter Oak International Academy. Members in attendance included: Eric Densley, Irene Garneau, Kerry Jones (proxy for Paul Vicinus), Jane Lehman, Eileen McCormick, Ellen Phillips-Wilcutts, Karen Scheinerman, Paula Stabnick, Andrea Thomas, and Deborah Zipkin.

1. Meeting began at 6:00 p.m. Co-Chair Jane Lehman welcomed members and brief introductions were done.

2. First, new School Readiness Council policies were discussed.

a. School Readiness Programs Toilet Training Policy. It was recommended that the Council develop a toilet training policy to be in compliance with the grant requirements, after receiving the following from the Office of Early Childhood: "Children may not be denied enrollment in any state-funded program solely as a result of their toilet learning status. Toilet learning is considered a developmental process. Young children's development is uneven and some children may be slower to mature in this area than others. Denying children enrollment in a program as a result of a normal developmental process is not allowed in any program receiving state funds."

The proposed West Hartford SRC Policy came from the WHPS policy and reads as follows:  
**The West Hartford School Readiness Council requires all School Readiness programs to adhere to the following policy:**

**Children registered for school programs are strongly encouraged to become toilet trained before entering the program. For children who have not completed their training, a planned approach will be developed for both school and home, collaboratively implemented by the child's family and the teacher to ensure consistency.**

After a vote of 9-0, the adoption of the SRC Toilet Training Policy passed.

b. School Readiness Program Commitment. The need for this policy was briefly addressed in the first SRC meeting in October '17 when the Council had to make adjustments to our space allotments among our program providers. This was due to an inability to utilize a space by a provider. The Council then had to reassign a Full Day/Full Year space to a School Year/School Space, which resulted in unused funds.

The proposed West Hartford SRC Policy to be implemented reads as follows:

**Once a school applies to become a West Hartford School Readiness provider and is accepted, the provider will receive an allocation of spaces. Accepting School Readiness funds constitutes a commitment of the provider to fill the allocated spaces for the full grant cycle.**

**In the event that a provider is unable to fill the allocated spaces, the School Readiness Liaison must be notified immediately. West Hartford School Readiness is mandated to return any unused funds designated for that space to the State of Connecticut.**

After a vote of 9-0, the adoption of the School Readiness Program Commitment Policy passed.

3. Next, Paula Stabnick gave the Liaison report.

- The second of the quarterly classroom monitoring visits have been completed, with all School Readiness slots full and no program issues to report.
- A couple of the program providers expressed an issue over the inability for the WH Public Library to come to private School Readiness providers. The Liaison followed up on these concerns and discovered that the library had a change in policy that keep resources on site now. The Council discussed some possible solutions to this matter for the future. Ellen Phillips-Wilcutts may have some ideas pertaining to this issue and will report back.
- After a late notification that the QE funding finally came through, the three Quality Enhancement grantees from the '17-'18 grant cycle were notified. The 4 QE professional development workshops have been scheduled. The JCC reports that they confirming dates with an expert consultant for their grant regarding socio-emotional training. Although the JCC was awarded the grant, they will open up the training to the SR provider community.

4. Finally, the Council discussed the Reapplication Process and Quality Enhancement (QE) Grants.

- We are nearly mid-way through the current two-year cycle of the School Readiness Grant. The Office of Early Childhood has announced that communities will have to complete a Reapplication Grant for the next year. Paula will work on this and submit by its due date of May 15.
- Although our providers/slots will remain the same, we will still need to put out a RFP Announcement for the QE Grants. As a priority district we are allotted \$3,881 in QE funds.
- The Council reviewed the idea of specifying focus areas in the QE RFP. Two noted areas of interest included young children's library/media services, and school safety and security. The library services evolved from the earlier discussion around the limitations of the WH libraries. The safety focus was raised by Irene Garneau, given the current national events surrounding schools. Eric Densy, security expert, offered insight possible ideas for future action.
- In the coming weeks, the Council will seek out members to act as readers/scorers for the QE grants received. Recommendations will then be presented to the Council at the next meeting.

5. The next School Readiness meeting will be on Monday, April 23 at 6:00 p.m.