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GRANT, AND NORWICH
ROTARY SUNRISE CLUB



Norwich Children First Initiative

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GREATER NORWICH
COMMUNITY
LEADERSHIP TEAM

COLLABORATORS:

Norwich Human Services

Norwich Youth & Family
Services

United Community and
Family Services

Norwich Public Schools

Thames Valley Council for
Community Action
Early Care and Education

Uncas Health District

Pooh Comer Preschool

Norwich Children First Initiative /
Norwich School Readiness Council

Meeting Minutes for March 15, 2006
Mission Statement

The mission of the Norwich Children First Initiative is to engage our families, schools, and community to improve life outcomes for young children.

The Children First Initiative/School Readiness Council Collaborative is an effort to create an early care and education agenda that fully engages parents schools, and the community.

Attendees: Jack Owens, Gaylen Ware, Deborah Buxton-Morris, Melissa Canova, Eliza Mayo, Cathy Cadavette, Jackie Jamrock, Duncan Proffitt, Maureen Hogan, Debbie Poirier, Teresa Messervy, Mary Broderick, Veronica Granger, Beverly Goulet, Sheila Skahan, Keith Ripley, Cathy Smith, Lynn DePina, Patricia Kornacki, Linda Massey, Chris Morello, Debbie Kievits, and Sherry Filiatreault

Welcome by Duncan Proffitt – Board Chairman

Current Workgroup Report

- Membership/Publicity
- Norwich School Readiness/Childcare
- Maria Miranda
- Regional Meetings
 - Strategic Communications
 - Eat Smart, Grow Healthy
- Advocacy Committee
- Greater Norwich Community Leadership Team
- Financial

Graustein Guidelines

- Birth to 8-years old
- To expand the supply of high quality early care and education in communities
- To improve the quality of existing early care and education
- To build strong connections between early care and elementary education
- To improve students' social, emotional and academic performance

School Readiness: The structure of the CFI/School Readiness Council was discussed. The liaison recommended that a division be made between the actual bi-monthly CFI meetings and the School Readiness meetings. The division is requested so that Norwich can comply with the School Readiness council requirements. The council should meet, with providers, to discuss issues related to School Readiness. However, at times when policies need to be reviewed, grants need to be read, and quarterly program monitoring needs to be discussed, the liaison needs a separate group of people to meet with that form the remainder of the council, aside from providers. It was voted on that the School Readiness council will meet as a separate subgroup and would have decision-making power; however, a status report will be

filed at the main CFI meetings every other month. Maureen will generate a list of meeting dates for future School Readiness Council meetings.

Membership/ Publicity: Spirit of Broadway has been reserved for August 13, 2006. There will be a block party atmosphere outside from 12:00-1:30, prior to moving inside. Sherry is looking for 8 adults to manage the children within the theater. The chair of each workgroup will be responsible for preparing a presentation for the event. Each workgroup should plan to have representation at the event, to talk with parents about the purpose of the group and to encourage involvement. All workgroups should:

- **Designate a chair.**
- **Make sure a display is put together.**
- **Find a representative to be available on the day of the event.**

The Montessori director offered the kitchen at their site to use to prepare food for the event. Maria Miranda will be helping with the event.

Regional Strategic Communications: Retreat planned for March 16th with Miranda Communications to help the region come up with a strategy/plan to speak with one voice on children's issues.

Eat Smart/Grow Healthy: Currently working to recruit more providers. The group did a presentation for the GMF and it was well received. Veronica from Pooh Corner indicated that the toolbox has been very well received.

CT Conference of Municipalities & Commission on Children: Roundtable discussion will be held at City Hall from 9-11:30 on Thursday March 23rd 2006. This is the second in a series of four regional roundtable discussions on acting locally to address childhood obesity issues.

Leadership Team: Voices class is entering its 4th week. Attendance has been low. The PEP (People empowering People) group is still recruiting, since only one person has signed up. The group focuses on parenting, self, and communication.

Deb Kievits gave a summary of the work being done by Bully Busters, who is looking to make changes at the school and community level. The Parent Grads are beginning to work on voter registration. The mentoring program continues to be strong. Deb also mentioned that the Mayor is a strong supporter of the mentoring program.

An Easter Egg hunt is scheduled for April 8th. Call Debbie (823-3782) for more information.

The Mayor will be doing an outreach event for youth. He is interested in feedback from youth.

Newsletter Articles: Sherry provided members with a copy of the newsletter and is asking for articles for the next issue.

GMF will be offering a regional learning circle on March 28th for eastern Connecticut. Dinner will be included. The purpose will be to discuss challenges and to work on improving the odds of children being successful. **This Learning circle was canceled.**

Wal-Mart has offered a \$2000.00 grant, with \$1000.00 for Bully Busters and \$1000.00 for CFI. Also due to Duncan's support of the mentoring program, Wal-Mart gave \$250.00 to CFI and \$250.00 to the mentoring program. In addition, Cathy Smith is now on the CFI board and CFI received \$250.00 for her time. Thanks to Wal-Mart for their continued support!

We are always looking for new members. If you know someone who would like to be on CFI work groups please let Sherry know.

**Next meeting is at the Dime Bank at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, May 17th
Hope to see you there!**