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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 Corner
Preschool

Norwich Children First Initiative / Norwich School Readiness Council

Meeting Minutes for
May 16, 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: Deborah Buxton-Morris, Pam Aubin, Cathy Cadavette, Jackie Jamrock, Duncan Profitt, Maureen Hogan, Debbie Poirier, Mary Broderick, Veronica Granger, Beverly Goulet, Sheila Skahan, Keith Ripley, Patricia Kornacki, Anne Krodel, Saran Dudley, Bestsy Bumpus, Kay Eyberse, Debbie Kievits, and Sherry Filiatreault

Welcome: The meeting was called to order by Duncan Profitt at 9:05 a.m. Duncan welcomed all members and explained that there will be a post meeting to discuss the issues that were raised at the meeting between the State Department of Education and CFN on May 11th.

Logo/Name: Sherry has been working with Maria Miranda to change our name. Sherry explained that the regional name of Children First Southeast CT will be used to represent our regional efforts. New London will serve as Children First New London, Groton has also been asked to change to Children First Groton and Norwich has changed the program name to Children First Norwich. The Regional group decided that all letterheads will show unity but that identity would be kept to each specific location. A discussion was held as to whether we could drop the word "Initiative" from CFI. Debbie Poirier made a motion to change the name of Norwich Children First Initiative to Children First Norwich. The motion was seconded by Kay.

By-Laws: A By-laws committee has been formed to work on a joint set of by-laws that address Children First Norwich collaborative efforts and School Readiness Council requirements. The Superintendent of Schools, Pam Aubin, suggested that a planning team be formed to look at existing members and to determine whether to add or delete from the existing membership. The committee will continue to work on a draft set of by-laws and will send out to all CFN committee members prior to submitting recommendations to the Mayor and Superintendent.

Retreat: It was decided that the council would like to pursue the Superintendent's idea of having a retreat to address the reorganization issues that Children First Norwich/School Readiness Council is facing. The following members volunteered to serve on this committee: Pam Aubin, Anne Krodel, Sherry Filiatreault, Duncan Profitt, Sheila Skahan, and Maureen Hogan-Scheuermann.

Meeting Times: The CFN council will resume meeting every month.

Current Workgroup Reports: Duncan explained that the workgroups are not functioning to their potential. Leaders are needed to take charge and organize meetings. Workgroup leaders should also be council members.

School Readiness Information:

- Norwich recently submitted the grant updates for the second year of the 2-year grant cycle. All sites were extremely supportive in getting paperwork to the liaison on time. An additional \$70,000 (approximate) was given to Norwich. Five full day slots were given to the FRC at Wequonnoc School, and 1 part-day slot was given to TVCCA Head Start.
- Joy Staples, the School Readiness Coordinator from the State Dept. of Education, visited Norwich last week to meet with council members and providers in two separate meetings.

Child Care Provider's Time/Training: The provider forum scheduled for May 11th was cancelled due to lack of participation from the community.

Membership/Recruitment: Sherry explained that plans are moving forward for the Spirit of Broadway event in August. Space at the Arts Council has been rented. The committee is looking for entertainment prior to the show. At 1:30, the children will watch the program and parents will go across the street to hear about Children First Norwich. The membership committee needs subcommittee chairs to speak and to recruit parents to become members of the Children First Norwich council. This recruitment role is a vital part of the many workgroup responsibilities for Norwich.

- Kindergarten registration: Invitations were put out during registration for recruitment of parents. Membership: Increased database. Rotary, others getting newsletter.
- Deb offered to recruit parents as well if she receives the same information.
- Duncan requested that articles be submitted for the next newsletter.

Regional meetings: Children First Southeastern CT. Looking at logos. Trade table that all three communities can use. How do we make three communities work well together?

Strategic Communications: Duncan mentioned that he has a program on public access called "CFN Hour". The next program will focus on Eat Smart/Grow Healthy. Pam Aubin suggested to Duncan that he talk with Roberta and Chris from Norwich Public Schools, who are involved in planning improvements for the nutrition program.

Advocacy Committee: No report at this time.

Greater Norwich Community Leadership Team: Kay mentioned that she was finishing up Voices for Families training. Parents offered training at Kelly Middle School on the importance of eating well and exercising. The parents will graduate June 19th.

Unfortunately, PEP did not get off the ground this year. Leadership mentioned that if anyone has a group for them to work with, they would be very willing to help.

Pamela Aubin invited the Leadership Committee to her PTO meeting at Central Office next Monday at 9:00. Kay will attend.

Family Day: September 17th. Restructuring – parents will not be charged. No selling of items allowed. Nonprofits can set up for free. \$250.00 for fund-based businesses to set up a table, allowing them to get exposure to over 2000 families. Family Day will make money and pay for itself. Do something for the children of Norwich. Larger. Paperwork will be looked over, changed...

Call Sherry if you want to be on the committee.

Keith will be photographer.

Pooh Corner will offer staff to work.

Financial: Discovery Grant: In 3rd year of contract. Ends in 2007. Received \$18,000 for regional money. Spent \$1200.00 so far to pay Miranda Creative. Received \$16,000 this year. As of 5/7, all money from prior years will be spent.

\$25,173 for remainder of year.

Other/New Business

Graustein Memorial Fund. Approached Leadership Team to participate in training all 49 Discovery towns in the state on our leadership model.

CFN will recruit for parents at Anti-Bullying Coalition. Parents/Bullybusters worked at state level to move bill forward. Debbie had a lot of support from state and local legislatures. Voices for Families helped us to have a voice!

Debbie mentioned that the Parent Involvement Bill has just been passed.

Also, planning Governor's Forum. Have candidates listen to parent views.

Technical Assistance meeting June 16th from Graustein Memorial Fund. Come and see how to increase community involvement. If anyone would like to attend, let Sherry know.

Madonna Place mentioned a Silent Auction to be held at Stonington Vineyards on _____. \$50.00 per person.