

Eastford's Readiness Council
Date: October 6, 2014
Eastford Elementary School
Unapproved Minutes

Members Present: Susan Shead, Heather Tamsin, Janelle Marengo, Christine Kopplin, Robin Bibeault, Michelle Bibeault, Jacki Budd, John Vitale, Ashlyn Ellsworth, Terry Cote

Members Absent: Theresa Neely, Linda Loretz

Public: Jen Barlow

1. **Audience of Citizens**
2. **Review Proposed Agenda-** Mrs. M. Bibeault asked to add the topic of Kindergarten Transition to New Business
3. **Review Minutes from September 8, 2014 Meeting-** The minutes were accepted with the correction that Linda Loretz was absent.
4. **Update on the Program-** Mrs. Kopplin reported that at the beginning of October started her classroom volunteer schedule. She currently has 10 parent volunteers which makes it so she has a volunteer for center time most days. The parents have been diligent about doing the orientation checklist before coming in. Last Friday they had a fire drill and assembly for Fire Prevention; the kids did an excellent job. Thursday they have a walking field trip to the Fire House scheduled. As well as 2 other field trips scheduled for the month of October: Walking trip to the library and a combined field trip with K-2nd grade to Creamery Brook Bison Farm on the 17th. October 21st marks the information night for parents regarding curriculum expectations. Childcare will be provided by Mrs. Budd. Since the last meeting NAEYC visited the program and there were no red flags just advisory notes. Final results should be in within the next few months. Mrs. M. Bibeault pointed out that they raved how organized Mrs. Kopplin had all the paperwork so they were able to find all they needed in record amount of time.

5. **Program Report-** Mr. Vitale reported that the state has administered a new sliding scale for income guidelines. These new guidelines will only be used for new students that aren't already in the program. CASE will be doing an Early Childhood Regression Discontinuity Design Study to evaluate Kindergarten transition. Certain students may randomly be selected. Mrs. M. Bibeault pointed out that she notices a significant difference between the students she has that have gone to a pre-school/Readiness program and those that have not.

6. **Old Business-** Mrs. Loretz will hire Jennifer Barlow as School Readiness Council Liaison. Mr. Vitale nominated Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. M. Bibeault seconded, all in favor.

7. **Budget Report-** Mr. Vitale reports that the Readiness Grant money is being used for the teachers' salaries and that there is currently about \$3800 in the Readiness account and about \$10,000 in Accounts receivable.

8. **New Business-**

8.1-Parent Recruitment-

Mrs. Ellsworth will be going on behalf of the Readiness Council to the Parent information night on the 21st to ask for volunteers to join the council. Mrs. R. Bibeault had been in contact with a few parents hoping to recruit them. It was mentioned that we could schedule another activity for the families before or after one of our meetings to make it more appealing for parents to come. Ms. Cote will be going to the Selectmen to recommend that Mrs. Barlow be added to the membership list.

8.2- Board Presentation-

Mrs. Ellsworth will come to the next meeting with what she will be presenting to the BOEd. She asked Ms. Tamsin to add her to the December BOEd agenda.

8.3- Kindergarten Transition-

Mrs. M. Bibeault reports that the students experience a drastic change going from having 2 or more adults in their classroom to one. She proposes that we or the BOEd consider hiring a paraprofessional for her classroom for

the first 4-6 weeks to help out with this transition time and learning new routines. Volunteers for the Kindergarten classroom have slowly been diminishing with more working parents. It was mentioned that this thought could be added to the Board presentation in December but all agreed it may need its own line item. Mrs. Budd mentions that Kindergarten really could use a Para all year. Mr. Vitale informs us that the Readiness grant cannot cover the cost as the para will not directly be working with Readiness students. Mrs. Kopplin asked if tuition money could be used to fund this position if the Board wasn't willing. Mr. Vitale doesn't think so for the before mentioned reason. It was also mentioned that maybe the Kindergarten should be NAEYC accredited as that would require there to be a para in the classroom. But the cost for hiring a para for 4-6 weeks is significantly less than going through accreditation even though Mrs. M. Bibeault would be willing if it was asked of her.

9. **Citizen's Participation-** none

10. **Items For Next Meeting (November 3, 2014)-** Look at Action Plan, Board Presentation