



Stratford School Readiness and Child Care Advisory Council

Executive Steering Committee Meeting Minutes ~ April 3, 2009

Members present: Lynnette Barony, Tom Coakley, Melissa Daskam, Sue Gottlieb, Christina Kazanas, Priscilla Long, Abel Padro, Carolyn Ross, Norma Tomes, Tammy Trojanowski, Elaine Watson

Members absent: Barbara Blosveren, Pat Naylor, Alix Semanchik

Consultants: Sonja Ahuja, Maria Mojica

1. **Welcome and Introductions/Approval of Minutes:** Sue Gottlieb called the meeting to order. MOTION made by Carolyn Ross to approve the minutes from the March 2009 Executive Committee meeting; SECONDED by Tom Coakley. APPROVED. Sue shared an article about the effect of the economy on child care utilization. This led to a lively discussion about space utilization in Stratford and the request from the state on the Estimate of Potential Space Needs. Abel Padro expressed the difficulty in determining an accurate estimate of spaces, and Priscilla commented that Stratford is experiencing the same difficulty.
2. **Partners Updates:**
 - Sue shared an invitation from the Superintendent to attend a public meeting to discuss the feasibility study on the renovation of Honeyspot House. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, 2009, 6:30 p.m. at Johnson House/Stratford Academy.
 - Norma Tomes, Knowledge Learning Corporation, shared that there are still 14 openings in the two school readiness classrooms. There are only four children staying the program; the rest are transitioning to kindergarten in August. Norma expressed her concern about the amount of time it takes for Care 4 Kids approval and how that can impact enrollment of children.
 - Abel Padro, ABCD Headstart, reported that they are still working out the MOU with the Stratford Public Schools.
 - Sonja Ahuja, Graustein Memorial Fund (GMF) Liaison, reported that GMF is sponsoring a series of Listening Forums throughout the month of April. These Forums will focus on GMF's workplan for the next couple of years. Sonja also informed the group about a Reading Achievement by Grade Three grant proposal that is a collaborative of GMF and the Annie Casey foundation. This very competitive grant proposal will go out to only one of two communities, but Sonja believes that Stratford should consider applying. Priscilla will send out this proposal information to the Stratford Public Schools, the Library and the Town Grant Writer.

- Elaine Watson, Stratford Public Schools (SPS), reported that Pat Naylor is finishing up with the kindergarten registration at the Stratford Library. She also reported that the SPS will invite Stratford preschool directors to an upcoming kindergarten grade level for some joint professional development.
- Tammy Trojanowski, Stratford Community Services, reported that the Youth and Family Advisory Board is continuing to explore the RYASAP data and has come up with some preliminary response to the data. In addition, Tammy reported that the CARE committee is continuing their work. Tammy announced that there is a Summer Youth Employment program scheduled for this summer, but the eligibility requirements are much more stringent this year. Eligibility is based on income for 14-24 year olds, and the youth/young adults must also present another barrier in order to qualify.
- Tammy reported on behalf of Greta Roberts, that the Health Department is sponsoring a Walk for Your Heart event on Saturday, April 4, 2009, at the Stratford Y. The walk begins at 8:00 a.m. rain or shine.

3. **Next Steps – Stratford’s Promise to Young Children with Maria Mojica**

Maria began her presentation with the reminder that the Promise work is in its last quarter of planning. Although the plan is due to the state on June 30, 2009, Maria reassured the group that this is a living document, and the work that is submitted will reflect where Stratford is at this moment in time. (See attached Power Point presentation).

Maria led the group through the Power Point presentation, and the ESC discussed the following items:

- The Promise plan will span a five-year period of time.
- The present and past co-chairs will comprise the Governance and Accountability Committees.
- The strategic work groups- **Ready to Learn**, **Family** and **Health** will reconvene to finish the following: including finance, timeline and priority to the best of their ability. The leaders of each group will meet and review duplication of action plans and decide on a format for submitting a beginning draft to the grant manager.
- The ESC will not complete the Governance and Accountability plan by June 30, 2009. The group agreed to work on this during the summer ESC Planning Meeting. In addition, this annual meeting will last for four hours instead of three. Staff will work on scheduling through a Survey Monkey document.

Sonja informed the group that GMF is currently developing an assessment document that each community will complete in lieu of a mid-year report.

4. **Communications** – Priscilla had a recent conversation with Anita Ford Saunders who stated that it seems that Stratford has made some progress in the communication area as a result of the work done in the strategic work groups. A small group will meet with Anita over the next month to discuss next steps.

5. **The next meeting of the Executive Steering Committee is on May 1, 2009, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m., room 110, Birdseye Municipal Complex, 468 Birdseye Street.**