

**Early Childhood Council Meeting
January 12, 2009; 9:00-11:30am
Harmony Library Community Room
4616 S. Shields Street, Fort Collins**

Introductions and Announcements

- The new library at Council Tree (SE Fort Collins, at Harmony & Corbett) will be open on March 28th.

Touchpoints Principle: Value passion where you find it
Small group activity- sharing your passions

Approval of December Minutes- Lorna Greene approves the minutes, Cathie McCallum seconds the motion, and all approve.

Ground rules established for today's discussions.

PSD Early Childhood- Preschool Pilot Program

- Conducted an October 2007 research study with CSU R & D department on fee-based preschool
- The findings of this study went to the Board of Education in November 2008; proposal for new fee-based preschool in Poudre developed from the findings
- The need for this program is driven in part by having more typical developing peers in current classrooms with at risk or special needs children
- Turned away 566 kids in the 07-08 year for not qualifying for at-risk funding (CPP, Head Start)
- The fee-based preschool program will be on a 4 year pilot with 54 kids in years 1 and 2 and an additional 54 kids in years 3 and 4
- Objectives
 - Develop a stronger preschool through 5 year community
 - Increase typical developing peers in classrooms
 - Develop high quality ECE program that are developmentally appropriate, standards based, and aligned to district goals
 - More efficient utilization of resources within ECE programs
- Fullana and Barton will house ECE office space, Early Head Start, Child Find Assessment, Therapeutic Play Groups
- All itinerate services (OT, PT, Counseling) will take place through the elementary schools (This change will happen regardless of fee-based preschools going into effect.)
- Stipends will be available for “specials” (i.e. library time) in the elementary schools with the fee-based preschools
- A Tuition Based Steering Committee will evaluate data and make recommendations to the Superintendent's cabinet
 - This committee will include representatives from PSD, ECCLC, and community providers (home and centers)

Discussion of PSD Plans

- Preschool sites will be half-day programs, 4 days/week
- There are currently ECE programs at many elementary schools, but only 4 sites will have the pilot fee-based preschools
- 47 current itinerate ECE staff will be placed in schools through integrated services and available to all preschool-5th grade children
 - EC Special Ed teachers will remain in current capacities
- Hope to be able to offer sliding scale spots later down the road
- Timnath, LaPorte and Wellington families are affected by location restrictions for access to preschool
- Results Matter work- do community sites have access to this tool? *PSD can and will provide access to the tool and data for community sites*
- Discrepancy on funding for Fullana site in the plan; the corrected version will be available on the PSD website
- 6 slots at Fullana will be CCCAP slots for ½ day preschool and 1/2 day at a community slot
- Will raising the % of typical developing peers in a classroom decrease space for at risk or special needs children?
 - More CPP slots will be sent to community sites
 - Possibility of opening a new classroom
 - Total COO and HS slots will not change
- What do typical developing peers gain from being integrated with more at-risk and special needs kids?
 - Some research says there may be no benefit
 - CSU R & D study says there are benefits if with a high quality teacher
- Cost of the program is set to fill the gaps between affording private preschool care and PSD funded slots (CPP, HS)
- Will still do development/hearing/vision screening for all kids
 - Potential that they would qualify for other funding if problems were found
- Will be a lottery drawing for families to enroll
- 10-15% of typical developing kids in tuition based preschools can end up in special education programs
 - Because of rigid PSD standards for equal funded slots (CPP, HS), it's hard to find typical developing kids currently in the ECE programs
 - Might be a change at Policy Council level for income guidelines
- Community sites would like to see language in the proposal about restrictions on expansion (that it won't ever become a full day, 5 days/week preschool program). PSD has stated they have no intention of this.
- Having no income guidelines can still make it unfair for low or moderate income families
- This Council would like to be informed about families not able to access ECE services because of location, cost, etc to share that information with the community
- Typical developing siblings of special needs kids who might be in a CPP or HS slots may need priority of preference
- Vulnerable population (low income) who might not have needs met with moving/closing of the Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park, UDCC Fullana and Head Start sites

- There is a fear among some community providers that is they won't be able to fill preschool classes, they won't be able to afford to continue infant/toddler care since preschool kids can often offset the high costs of doing I/T care
- No intention or space to ever have only regular/typically development classrooms or preschools within PSD

Strategic Planning

- The Board made a few language changes to include all current programs and activities
- Input from group work:
 - Medical Home
 - Objective 4A- Once some trainings are complete, get education materials to the providers
 - Access/Availability of Care
 - Define “moderate income”
 - Objective 2B- add Results Matter (including Core) trainings to activities
 - Objective 2C-use the Council to help create partnerships to take advantage of tax credits for real estate in areas where care is not accessible
 - Professional Development
 - Objective 1C- clarify and help market higher education opportunities that meet regulatory standards
 - Mental Health
 - Objective 3A- explain how trainings are chosen and how additional trainings will/can be offered, some through partnerships with other organizations
 - Health & Wellness
 - Objective 5A- value parent/provider expertise in disseminating this information
 - Objective 5A- “use existing community health and wellness activities *and systems...*”

Program Updates- in writing attached to agenda

About this meeting-

Positives:

- on task
- on time
- lost of different view points represented
- stuck to the ground rules
- respectful
- clear information, well presented

Negatives:

- strategic plan portion very rushed
- better organization of small group work
- do not like the circle formation without tables
- no networking break