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Special Meeting
Vernon School Readiness Council
4/5/23 Minutes
Fully Virtual- Evening meeting 6:30pm
Draft Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions

Present: Anna Figueroa, Michelle Hill, Kimberly Manganello, Jenn Motta, Joy Houlder, Sherry Yarusewicz

Michelle noted this was our first evening meeting. Hope that the time is more family friendly. These are open meetings. Spread the word.

II. Review and Approval of draft minutes for 12/7/22 and 3/1/2023 (*tabled*)

III. School Readiness Liaison – Updates

We opened the floor for questions on documents provided for review 3/27 email included:

- School Readiness Overview and Description
- GP C-01 School Readiness Council Membership, Responsibilities, and Role of Liaison
- Staff Qualifications and Registry Requirements
- School Readiness Quality Enhancement Grant Program Overview
- Freedom of Information-Council Understanding and Assurance

There were no questions.

A. VSRC approval for FY2023-24 RFA for School Readiness continuation funding.

Michelle shared information on the SR Grant process. What a full application looks like vs continuation, which we are currently in. She explained how programs apply to the Council for SR slots, along with requirements for programs to apply (such as Accreditation status).

We currently have 2 great providers, and this is a continuation year with no new funding. As such, a formal vote will be taken on whether to continue as is. No other new programs can

apply during this phase. No one present had any objection to continuation as is. The liaison reports we are on track with our grant submission timeline.

B. Quality Enhancement- totaling \$3,881.00

Anna explained what these dollars can be used for as well as what they have been used for the past couple years. Anna also explained that she is currently working with Conscious Discipline on a potential plan for an in-person training/mentoring day.

IV. Vernon's Better Together Initiative- VBT

A. New Application

Our new application for the period of 4/1/23-12/31/23 is nearly complete. It will be submitted tomorrow. We are hopeful there will be no need to halt momentum and services will continue seamlessly.

B. Parent update- planned activities

Sherry discussed how as a preschool teacher at VPS, she has day to day contact with families and what she hears from them echoes our survey results, namely,

- Parents need and want full day preschool
- Parents want peer role models for children with special needs.
- Transportation

Sherry explained as she understands, when HS left VPS, so went meals and transportation and hours provided changed.

Sherry noted she has been told the waitlist is very long. She described one mother's challenge in not being able to get her child to and from school and how she needs full day care.

Kimberly reported out on work she is doing with Kara at the library to "beef up" their partnership. They are working to coordinate programming for children and families.

The Parent Café's will continue. Hoping to provide 1/m on the weekend at the library, and one potentially during the week in the evening. Parents report that they enjoy getting together with their kids. Parents are sharing ideas through an interactive "idea wall". The parent voice team is beginning to discuss an outside larger family event (requested by families). Also, under planning is how to support families who have children transitioning to kindergarten, as this is reportedly a stressful time. The parent voice team will plan events and activities together with families.

Café's are being planned to be intentional and intimate. Kimberly would like to look into a grandparent café. Anna mentioned OEC has done nice work around engaging grandparents. This can be a resource.

V. Program Updates

A. Program Enrollment

Jenn "Y": Enrollment doing very well! SR slots are full

C. Program Highlights

"Y"

- 1 ½ staff away from being fully staffed
- I/T very full- approved for 6 more CDC I/T slots
- ARPA grant \$7,000 of funding for Vernon, \$38,000 for GHYMCA (dollars are earmarked for flooring, playground, etc)
- "Y" is working collaboratively with ECHN and assisting with families who need emergency slots.

It was mentioned that David Owens can help get information out and can be a resource as we update our website.

D. Challenges

None noted

ECHN FRC: Joy reports this will be their 2nd year of holding summer programming at Park West. 1st grade to 5th grade. They will have 25 kids a day that will be able to pick up activities and go. They will also have facilitators and instructors. Last year the Karate instructor was a big hit.

Joy asked Michelle about the summer food program. It will continue this summer. 11:45-12 mealtime. VPS providing meals.

Submitted by: Anna Figueroa, SR Liaison