

# Griswold School Readiness Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 18, 2023 via ZOOM

Contact School Readiness Liaison Cheryl LaMothe at [clamothe@eastconn.org](mailto:clamothe@eastconn.org) for ZOOM link and more information.



**Present:** Jesse Simoneau (GPS McKinny Vento rep), Jaselyn Caviness (SR co-chair), Heather Lunny (The Little Log School House), Sarah McEwen (GPS school nurse), Stephanie Cote (Griswold Early Learning Program), Debbi Poirier (TVCCA Griswold Little Learners), Katy Sawaryn (SR co-chair), Sean McKenna (GPS Superintendent), Kayla Hedman (GPS communication & media specialist), Cheryl LaMothe (Griswold SR Liaison)

## Program Updates:

- **Griswold Early Learning Program:** Curriculum focus on winter/emotions, Kindness in the Classroom focus is on inclusiveness. Several enrichment activities have taken place or are planned through February: Wildlife visit, World Read Aloud Day, Free Little Library. Program will be sending out annual NAEYC Family surveys as part of their comprehensive program evaluation process. CT DOTS info will be shared with families. There are plans for an additional PreK screening day on 2/10, with free books given to children. Griswold has a lottery system in place regarding future enrollment, is sharing information with parents, and includes a developmental history of children, with any developmental concerns being addressed. Staff have been engaged in ongoing PD related to BCBA, and through OEC.
- **TVCCA Griswold Little Learners:** Staff recently participated in literacy training. Eastern CT Ballet will be visiting the program, integrating music, movement & dance, with early literacy, during their performance. There are ongoing discussions with CT Storytellers to also visit the program. TVCCA has recently hired an Outcomes Data Manager who will be reviewing data that will be used to support future program goal setting, identify program strengths and opportunities for growth, future PD. Sean requested that data be shared with GES as they collaborate to support incoming children. Debbi will share information with Joe.
- **The Little Log School House:** The program's new Infant/Toddler room is staffed and open. The program has several new staff members, with ongoing training and support in process. Heather and Terry Wydra (program director) are working on a

transition plan for supporting children/families as they move on to Kindergarten, with transition events taking place in March.

**Program Monitoring:** School Readiness requires ongoing monitoring by the School Readiness Council. This process includes classroom observations, file review, policy review, etc. by the SR Liaison, with results shared with the council. Monitoring documents were uploaded to the shared google folder and are available for council members to review. All programs are current in the OEC Registry (as required), child files in order, staff PD ongoing. Policy review (family handbooks) indicated that programs are striving to meet OEC/SR quality components and expectations as outlined in SR General Policies. Programs have ongoing collaborations with several entities in the community. It is important that those collaborations are noted and documented through collaboration agreements or MOUs, indicating ongoing community collaboration as required by SR/OEC. Council members are encouraged to contact Cheryl if there are any questions regarding monitoring documents. Cheryl has reached out to sub-grantees to schedule next monitoring visits in February.

**Additional Monitoring Discussion:** Sub-grantees were requested to provide financial updates to the council 2 X annually (as required by OEC). A School Readiness Program Expenditure Report form was shared with the council and with sub-grantees earlier this year. Sub-grantees requested that they present this financial update during the March SR Council Meeting. Discussion included concern that sub-grantees have not received timely allocation payments, therefore have been unable to complete financial reports. This concern was brought forth during the October sub-grantee meeting and ongoing communications with the business office over the past several months. The process for monthly reports documenting enrollment in each program has changed since last year, but is currently in place with reports shared with the business office regularly. The SR Liaison and finance director have been in contact as well, and are making efforts to streamline monthly allocation payments to sub-grantees as required. Cheryl will follow up with the business office and superintendent, working to ensure programs receive all payments in a timely manner.

**GPS Website:** Kayla Hedman was invited to the SR Council meeting to share changes made to the website, enhancing information re: Griswold's Early Learning Program. The website is more user-friendly, contains additional information. Cheryl requested that additional information regarding Griswold's School Readiness programs be included. She will meet with Kayla, Debbi from TVCCA and Heather from The Little Log School House to consider ways to include information from all School Readiness programs in the community.

<https://www.griswold.k12.ct.us/ges/about/preschool-program>

**OEC Updates:** OEC has provided additional funding to School Readiness programs through the Enrollment Enhancement Grant. These funds are available quarterly and will be distributed to eGMS and processed through the fiduciary. Grant guidelines were shared with sub-grantees

and the business office. The funds are meant to provide additional stabilization to School Readiness programs throughout the state.

**Community Roundtable:** There were no community members present.

**Next SR Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 15 at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Jennifer Norman will share experiences from her trip to a Reggio Emilia School in Italy.**