



**Children First Griswold/ Griswold School Readiness
December 2, 2011
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Mission: To ensure that all young children and their families have access to quality opportunities and resources so they will have a successful educational experience. We connect people, resources, and ideas in order to educate the community to value programs and services for children birth to eight.

MEETING MINUTES

In Attendance:

1. Ryan Aubin, CFG Chair, Griswold YFS/PR
2. Melissa Blondet, parent
3. Catherine Bradshaw, Consultant
4. Deborah Buxton-Morris, Uncas Health
5. John DeIorio, Acting Superintendent
6. Cynthia Ferri-Provost, Head Start Family Liaison
7. Anne Grzelak, Slater Library-Children's Librarian
8. Julie Hall, Kidsteps-Birth to Three
9. Jennifer Herkner, CFG Executive Committee parent rep, military support
10. Tina Hicks, TVCCA Little Learners
11. Madeline Illinger, Director, Pre-school/Special Ed
12. Kathy Iovino, GES Social Worker, School Readiness, CFG Executive Committee
13. Lori Kurasz, School Readiness Coordinator, CFG Executive Committee
14. Sheri Lambert, Pre-K Teacher
15. Stuart Norman, Vice-Chair, Griswold Board of Education
16. Greta Silva, parent
17. Joy Smith, CFG Coordinator, Parent
18. Beth Ware, Parent
19. Claudia Zatorski, Owner/Director, Little Log School House

Introduction

The meeting was chaired by Ryan Aubin and co-chaired by Joy Smith. Joy welcomed everyone and gave special thanks to acting Superintendent John Dilorio for joining the meeting.

Review of Minutes

Joy reviewed and gave progress report on the 11/4 CFG minutes. Joy met with both the Chair and Vice-Chair and received positive support for CFG and our emerging Community Plan. She will be making a presentation to the Board early in the New Year.

Joy requested assistance from the group in taking minutes. Beth Ware agreed to record and type up meeting minutes. A small stipend will be provided.

School Readiness Report

Lori Kurasz reported on school readiness. The program was very busy going through some enrollment changes, as well as working toward NAEYC accreditation. They were also chosen to launch a new pilot program for scanning all staff and their credentials. The goal of this is to make reporting easier in the future.

Lori announced that at the state coordinators meeting it was reported that a \$12,500 grant would be given to CFG. This money will be first allocated to TVCCA and then broke down to different areas, including stipends.

Lastly, we learned about the possibility of state funding being provided for a teacher coaching initiative.

Coordinator's Report

Joy Smith reported on progress her first month in post. Highlights include:

1) Communication Plan:

Joy's goal was to send out an e-newsletter to keep everyone informed. Several websites that assist in organizing and messaging were researched. The group approved the annual expense of up to \$350/ to use Constant Contact.

2) Interim report:

Joy has been working on this report and sought clarification from group to complete the report. The group discussed/agreed on the following points.

- a) It was agreed that the Executive Committee would meet two weeks before each CFG meeting for agenda setting.
- b) The group agreed that a quarterly CFG informational meeting would be held later in the day to allow others to attend.

3) Leadership

Joy announced Tiffany Valentine as the new chair of the Education Domain Team. Cynthia Ferri-Provost is the chair of the Health Domain Team. Jen Herkner will serve as the parent representative on the CFG Executive Committee.

Action: Schedule monthly executive meeting and quarterly info meeting.

Owner: Joy Smith

Plan Progress

Catherine reviewed the timeline of the work plan, reminding everyone that the group should currently be focused on developing strategies. This will be followed by or overlap with developing performance measures. The rough deadline to have this work complete is the end of February. She stressed that domain teams are focused on finalizing their reports and identifying key partners.

Catherine also highlighted opportunities and challenges of the group.

Opportunities:

- Reinvigorated relationship with Board of Education
- High level of parental involvement
- Opportunities for collaboration/sharing of best practice with neighboring communities

Challenges:

- Increasing involvement from local businesses and clergy.

Action: Contact deacon from St. Mary's Church in Jewett City.

Owner: Anne Grzlak

Discussion ensued on the issue of transient students/families and it was agreed that we would need to develop our strategies with this in mind. Jen expressed concern for the lack of knowledge/understanding of this issue for military families.

Action: Identify key partners who can provide data on migrating families and can reach out to them. Investigate why families move in and out of town and how we can minimize the effect on their children.

Owner: Domain Teams

Ad-hoc Finance Committee

It was agreed that the Domain Teams would do a fiscal scan as they develop their strategies and supporting activities.

Also discussed was extending the help of CFG at the Youthtopia event in May as well as the Water Fire event, possibly having CFG "sponsor" the event to gain exposure.

The group discussed options for graphic design of the plan. Ryan recommended we reach out to a student intern from Three Rivers.

Action: Research possibility of Three Rivers Intern providing service for academic credit.

Owner: Joy Smith

Community Event

Discussion took place around our Community Consultation event in the Spring. Ideas were generated and it was agreed that an ad-hoc event team would be established. Madeline, Anne, Melissa, Claudia and Greta agreed to join.

Action: Hold Community Consultation planning meeting

Owner: Joy Smith, et al.

Upcoming Training

Joy announced the December RBA training events: December 6th and 9th

Action: Forward training links to entire CFG Collaborative

Owner: Joy Smith

The meeting adjourned at 11:30am. Minutes taken, typed and submitted by Beth Ware.

The next meeting will be on **Friday, January 6, 2012 at 9:30am.**

Members with children are welcome to arrive at 9:15am to check their child/children into the childcare room so we can begin our business meeting at 9:30.

Children First Griswold is funded by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and the School Readiness Council.