

## Lisbon School Readiness Council

### Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2023

**Present:** Scott Trepanier, Christopher Sheldon, Rachel Ricard, Kathy Snyder, Courtney Kinmonth, Holly Smelser, Theresa Svab, Patrick McCormack, Brittany Boulanger, Samantha Mercer, Heather Aguirre, Terry Surprenant, Paula Gooslin

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 8:51 A.M. Christopher, Co-Chair, facilitated the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:** Theresa moved to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2023 meeting. Kathy seconded. All members voted and the minutes were approved.

#### **Liaison report:**

- The SR Renewal application was submitted. Programs should receive word of the award by early June.
- The school requested an additional 17 part-day spaces and it was approved. **This doubles the grant dollars** that will be received annually effective April 1st and moving forward.
- Terry will be supporting the program to address the needs of children who remain at school for an extended day.

**Monitoring:** Terry will be observing each of the classroom teachers using a tool called the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). It looks at three areas: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. We've scheduled this for May 17th. She will return for additional monitoring on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and while there will debrief teachers and Scott on the results of that observation.

**Staff Change:** Terry introduced Paula Gooslin from EASTCONN who has been assigned to Lisbon in the role of Liaison/Monitor for the next school year.

**Overview of School Readiness:** Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-16p established the School Readiness Grant program and designated the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood as the lead agency for this program. Terry described the history and purpose of this competitive grant for which communities must apply every 2 years. Classroom teachers have at least a bachelor degree in early childhood education. The family fees help support the program and are calculated on a sliding scale based on family size and income. Lisbon Central School has received these funds for many years and is meeting a variety of quality components including national accreditation to maintain its participation as a SR preschool. The OEC has additional information about the program on its website.

<https://www.ctoec.org/school-readiness-preschool-grant-program/>

**NAEYC Reaccreditation:** Scott explained the 5-year renewal process that included development of program and classroom portfolios to demonstrate the ways the program is meeting a variety of criteria on 10 standards of quality. At the culmination of this process, an assessor came to the program and reviewed the portfolios, observed in a classroom and walked through the school to gather evidence. Scott recently received word that the program **passed** the requirements with high marks (95.2% overall). He shared some of the specific scores – with the program portfolio receiving 97%, Observation 91%, Relationships (including family and community) 100%! The accreditation status is good for 5 years. **Congratulations to the team on this wonderful achievement!!**

**The Early Childhood Program:** Lisbon School Readiness currently provides 2 classrooms with morning and afternoon sessions. The grant helps offset the cost of care by funding 34 part-day, school-year spaces. Teachers plan developmentally appropriate curriculum based on the [CT Early Learning and Development Standard \(ELDS\)](#). They assess children’s ongoing development with a tool called [CT DOTS](#). This allows the teachers to gather data about children’s skills, abilities, and behaviors; plan additional supports; and summarize evidence of children’s progress.

**Special Education:** The preschool program provides integrated classrooms where children with diverse needs can play and learn together. Scott explained that some children require additional supports based on the goals outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). The program addresses those needs in a variety of ways. A certified special education teacher and other specialists are able to provide many of these supports within the classroom. There are also times when it is more effective to provide related services in another space where there is less distraction and children can receive one-to-one or small group opportunities. Related supports include Speech, OT and PT. The school has numerous spaces such as the OT/PT Room, Speech Room and Special Ed Resource Room that can be utilized for various purposes. The appropriate strategies are planned for and outlined in each IEP. Additionally, Counselors are on staff to address social and emotional needs.

**Family Engagement:** Parents in attendance were welcomed and invited to provide input. Heather took the opportunity to describe that her child has benefitted from the program’s use of the Resource Room for a portion of his day to focus on his individual needs. She is glad that this has been effective; he is thriving. She thanked the staff for their efforts!

### **SR Quality Components:**

Transition to K plan – There is a requirement that programs provide a smooth transition for preschool to Kindergarten for children and families. Some activities include:

- Sharing assessment and anecdotal notes with receiving teachers.
- Engaging preschool and Kindergarten children in joint activities
- Preschool and Kindergarten classrooms in close proximity to allow natural interaction so children get to know each of the K teachers before they begin in their rooms.
- Courtney said that before Covid protocols, they used to bring children to the Kindergarten classroom to meet teachers and learn about what goes on there (perhaps they could resume this practice).

- The OEC produced a booklet that can be shared with families (English and Spanish) Terry provided copies to the program. <https://www.ctoec.org/hello-kindergarten/>

Annual Evaluation – SR programs are required engage in continuous improvement. The NAEYC self-study and accreditation process have already provided much data about current strengths and opportunities for growth. Each year the program surveys families to elicit feedback and input. Scott will be sending a questionnaire soon for this purpose.

### **Coming Events/News/Updates:**

Program updates were provided in writing to the council. Courtney also noted that the children have been able to observe the metamorphosis of caterpillars in the classroom. They are also spending more time outdoors. Quality Enhancement funds have been utilized to order books that will be gifted to families to encourage reading at home. The topics selected include families, appreciating differences, and emotions. These books will be sent home soon.

Health Dept. – Patrick shared that the school could utilize their services to support vaccination efforts including the flu shot. They have a mobile van that could bring them to the school (or even to a home if a family needs that option). They are working toward approval to accept insurance in the near future.

Town Library – Becky was not in attendance but Christopher shared that families can look in the Dear Parents and Friends paper for information about offerings at Slater Library. They are planning to include summer programs about animals and endangered species this year.

Lisbon Central School – It's getting close to the end of the school year (26 days left). There are end of year activities planned including field trips and progress reports went home recently.

School Nurse – Theresa will be sending home letters soon reminding families of preschoolers and Kindergarteners that physicals need to be updated annually and immunizations need to be up to date in order to attend school.

**Fiscal update** – Rachel and Scott are working to update budgets due to additional funding that has been recently received.

### **Meeting Schedule/Topics:**

The Council will likely continue to meet every other month during the next school year on Thursday mornings. The administrators will determine which dates will work for them and a list will be posted and shared with members by June. Families were invited to let the program know of any interest in particular topics for discussion or needs for information.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m. This was the final meeting of the school year. **Thanks to everyone for your support of School Readiness in Lisbon!!**

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Surprenant, SR Liaison

***These minutes are unofficial until approved at the next School Readiness Council Meeting***