

Childhood Readiness and Success Team Notes – March 14, 2011



Team Goal: In Carroll County, all children are ready for Kindergarten and achieve at or above grade level success by the end of third grade.

Attendance: Howard Cunningham, Nancy Coville, Carol DeLaurier, Shawna Puglia, Cyndi Paulin

Next Meetings: Wednesday, April 13, Monday, May 9. Meetings will be at Tri-County CAP 6:00-7:30 pm. June 16 (evening) – community wide meeting with all teams.

- Team focused on Kindergarten Readiness workshops on March 29th and how to best connect with attendees. Team will provide lunch for those attending the morning and afternoon sessions and host a brief conversation.
- The team also discussed the Early Childhood parade being held on May 4th and decided to host a simple activity.
- The team discussed next steps for Watch Me Grow screening day in Wakefield and their desire to figure out the long-term use of the tool.

Kindergarten readiness – March 26th workshops

- Team will provide pamphlets with an overview of the team; specifically the focus on childhood readiness and the current projects. The information will include the long-term interest of permanent change vs. quick fix.
- Most of the attendees for the morning and afternoon sessions are coming to both sessions. The team will provide them lunch and host a brief discussion to gather input about people's ideas to improve Kindergarten readiness. There are already have 8 people signed up for the two workshops!

Early Childhood Parade

- Shawna asked if the team would consider participating in the Early Childhood parade scheduled for May 4th (Rain date May 6) at Schuler Park in celebration of the week of the young child. Team decided to offer a simple activity that would be in alignment with the focus of the team as an outreach activity to meet more early childhood providers and parents.
- Carol will design a sheet for the kids to draw their favorite place/way to read. Cyndi will draft a simple statement about the team to go on the back. We will need tablecloths, markers, crayons – will tables be provided?
- The team suggested that perhaps the town recreation departments would be willing to run some games

Watch Me Grow – next steps to expand the use of the screening tool in the county.

- Mary James & Penny Ellis from the Congregational Church in Wakefield will help us with the contacts and location in order to put together a screening day in Wakefield. The team would like to host a training of both our team members and local people from Wakefield who would like to be trained to use the Watch Me Grow screening tool. It will be critical to have local people trained so that the use of the tool can become embedded within the community and not just be a one shot deal. We are waiting to hear back from Jackie Sparks about what timing would work for them. Nancy Coville offered her location for the training.

[Note: we have heard back from Jackie that May would be a good time if it works for Wakefield. The suggestion is to schedule the screening day and then schedule the training a couple of weeks prior.]

- Mary & Penny also shared that they are concerned about the lack of early childhood learning opportunities and after-school programs for Wakefield children. The church has an excellent facility with large classroom space and is considering how they might use that space to support the community at large. They are open to collaborating with others.
- The team is thinking about how to support Watch Me Grow to be used long-term and not just be a series of one-shot screening days. One idea is to host an annual or semi-annual get together.
- Effingham librarian is a huge supporter of literacy and early childhood learning. He would be a great contact when the time comes!

School Surveys – where are we:

- K.A. Brett and Madison elementary schools have returned their surveys. Freedom and Bartlett are the only two left.
- Staff began reformatting the report containing the information from the schools into something that will be more user-friendly. Nancy Coville and Howard Cunningham took copies to work on and provide feedback.

Elementary Schools' progress –

Carol volunteered to input the 4th grade NECAP scores from 2005-2010 into the table so we can take a look to see if the trend follows the improvement trend seen in the 3rd grade scores. (Because the assessments are given in the fall, the 4th grade scores would best reflect the improvement in reading proficiencies over time at the end of 3rd grade.) The hope is that looking at trends over time will give us more information about our schools' progress than the yearly results that are typically reported in the media.

Last month, the team reviewed statistical information that staff gathered that shows the county trends for the NECAPs taken in third grade for reading proficiencies show an overall improving trend since 2005/06 even while the economic data shows that life has become harder for families and children since there is also an upward trend in free and reduced lunch participation. In 2005 there were 6 schools with 30% or higher participation in free and reduced lunch and in the fall of 2009 there were 10. Likewise we went from 2 to 3 schools that had 50% or more participation. Staff will update this information for 2010 and also look at the Grade 4 NECAPS which would reflect end of third grade reading proficiencies, the benchmark the team is interested in.