



GECC Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2008

A meeting of the *Granby Early Childhood Council* (GECC) was held on Monday, September 8, 2008 at the Farmington Valley YMCA Community Room. In attendance were:

Jenni Raabe- Parent

Sarah Thrall- Parent

Nannie Brown- Valley Preschool

Barbara Swanson- Creative Learning Preschool

John Kroninger- Parent

Bonnie Quinlan- First Grade Teacher, Granville, MA

Alan Addley - Superintendent of Granby Schools

Sheri Litchfield- Preschool Teacher and GECC Secretary

Joan Rogers- Discovery and GECC Coordinator

Cindy Guerreri- Graustein Memorial Fund Community Liaison

The September 8, 2008 meeting began at 6:41 pm in the community room of the YMCA. Joan Rogers, GECC Coordinator, conducted the meeting for Chairperson Janet Ford, who was visiting family in Utah. Joan welcomed Council members and guests and introductions took place.

Joan stated that attendance at this meeting was low, and acknowledged that it was due to a conflicting schedule with the Open House at the Kearns Primary School. Principal Kim Dessert and several parents had contacted Joan to indicate they would not be able to attend this evening.

Joan asked if there were any additions, deletions or revisions to the minutes from the July 7, 2008 meeting. A motion was made to accept the minutes by Jenni Raabe and seconded by John Kroninger. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Joan gave the report from Dot Muszynski who was unable to attend the meeting. The GECC remaining balance is \$4,259.17. A second installment payment for 08' of \$17,500 from the Graustein Memorial Foundation is expected soon.

Joan reported on the GECC 08-09' Workshops being offered to families in Granby. She thanked all who are volunteering their time and talents to conduct these community workshops (Bonnie Quinlan, Dr. Ungerleider and Paula Abrahmsom). A list of the eight workshops being offered were distributed to members in attendance, and Joan announced that she had delivered the flyers to preschools and daycare centers in town. The first workshop is being offered on Tuesday evening, September 23, from 6-8:00 pm in the Community Room of the YMCA. Beth Bye, formerly the Director of Early Childhood Education, Capital Region Education Council, and Linda Marshall, Granby Early Education Resource Teacher, Kearns Primary School, and GECC member, will present on "**Early Childhood Growth and Developmental Milestones / Special Needs.**" Preschools and Day Care Centers were asked to share the information with their families and to help emphasize the importance of pre-registration for the workshops. In order to

provide enough space, food, and free childcare, a courtesy of a response is needed. A suggestion was made to add this to the website.

A few new items have been added to the website, thanks to web master, John Kroninger. A member survey and several new links to articles and websites have been included. A link for “tips for supporting your child's development” was discussed. It was also suggested by Kim Dessert at a previous meeting this summer with Joan and Janet that the GECC website include (1) early literacy information from the Children's Public Librarian such as:

- reading book lists that change seasonally
- include both fiction and nonfiction titles
- include the Newberry Books
- include a link for beginning chapter books
- Nutmeg winners
- Best Read A Louds
- Link for Story times

and (2) include child safety information such as car seat safety, leaving children unattended in vehicles, unsupervised children in home settings, the dangers of guns, drugs or alcohol in the homes of young children, etc. The Coordinator has discussed these suggestions with both Evie C. at the library, and Chief Watkins. Further suggestions from Council members were offered to contact CCMC and the Health Department for additional GECC website information.

An update on the development of a Family Resource Center and the Parents As Teachers Program was shared with the membership. Paul Vivian, a consultant affiliated with Yale University, will be meeting with the Ad-hoc FRC Committee on September 16th to discuss conducting a feasibility study for Granby around a FRC, to include conducting focus groups. The focus groups, when scheduled will be advertised both in the Drummer, and the Hartford Courant, and will be shared with local child care providers. Holcomb Farm continues to work toward its offer of providing space for a FRC. The GECC leadership has been in regular dialog with the Executive Director of Holcomb Farm on this issue.

The Parent Educator Position was advertised in both the Drummer and the Yankee Flyer. So far, 8 responses from highly qualified individuals have been received and letters of acknowledgment have been returned to these applicants. The closing date for applications is September 30th. Following this date, interviews will be scheduled and conducted by the Executive Committee, with a November 1st start up date expected for this position. With the PAT training scheduled during the last week in October, Cindy suggested that applicant interviews begin as soon as possible.

A report from the Ad-hoc By-Laws Committee was given by Sheri Litchfield. Linda, Nannie and Sheri met over the summer to discuss changes that needed to be made to the By-laws. In Article I, NAME, the name was changed by the Council in November 07' from the Granby School Readiness Council to the Granby Early Childhood Council, known as GECC. In ARTICLE II, the GECC missions statement was added under PURPOSES, that, “**all children arrive at school healthy and socially and emotionally prepared for academic success and life-long learning.**” Changes were also made to ARTICLE IV, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, where the duties of the membership were explained. A discussion

regarding change in the Executive Board terms took place and Joan offered to explore what other Discovery communities have in place. A discussion also took place pertaining to how the GECC will determine its membership. Since the By-laws state that attendance at meetings by its members is expected, do we consider only those who attend on a regular basis as GECC members? In attempt to be as inclusive as possible, the By-laws committee will reconvene and bring its suggestions to a later meeting.

Joan discussed with the Council the search and time frame to instate a new GECC Chairperson and Committee Chairs - Chair in January 0f 09' and Committee Chairs in June 09'
(Co-Chair arrangements suggested for GECC Chairperson / Committee Chairs)

Joan explained that beginning in January, Janet wants her personal direction to be more inward driven. She is willing to do one of two things come January:

1. Serve as Past Chair and advisor to a new Chairperson or
2. Act as a Co Chair with another Co-Chair – her goal is to not want to be fully responsible for so many meetings. She wants the Council and the community to have an eye towards someone else taking the lead for the GECC in the near future.

All members were asked to consider their time and talents in helping the GECC continue to develop, so that families with children in Granby can benefit from the work of the GECC. The GECC is seeking volunteers to serve – people can volunteer to serve without a nomination - Please contact Coordinator with Interest and/or Nominations by December 1st.

Bonnie Quinlan distributed copies of the first draft of the Granby School Readiness Booklet that she has been working on over the past several months designed for families who have children getting ready to enter kindergarten . She asked for feedback from the Council and expects several more drafts before seeking final approval. Bonnie's attempt at keeping the information thorough, yet concise was discussed, and a suggestion was made that perhaps some of the information or ideas could be shared on the GECC website.

Joan shared that Gary is still looking to form an Ad-hoc Committee to organize a family fun event and a GECC fund raiser called, "Are You Smarter Than A Granby 2nd Grader?" The Committee will need several months of planning, so a spring time frame for holding this event is desired. Simsbury Bank has expressed an interest in helping to sponsor this event for the GECC. If you are willing to help organize and plan this event, please contact Joan or Gary.

New Resource Materials were announced and made available on the back table by Joan.

The next GECC meeting will be held on Monday evening, October 6th, at the YMCA.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Sheri Litchfield, GECC Secretary