



The Annual Meeting of the *Granby Early Childhood Council* (GECC) was held on Monday, June 1, 2009 at the Farmington Valley YMCA Community Room. In attendance were:

In Attendance:

Judi Cosgrove,	GECC Co-Chairperson
Sheri Litchfield	GECC Co-Chairperson
Mary Myers	Parent
John Kroninger	Parent and Chair of GECC Public Awareness Committee
Gary Ebersole	Parent and GECC Graphic Artist
Janet Ford	Grandparent and former GECC Chairperson
Caissy Cross	Creative Learning Preschool
Celeste Hassel	Creative Learning Preschool
Jenn Anderson	Parent
Brian Bergeson	Senior Executive Director, FV YMCA
Christina Hall	Parent
Peggy Deschenes	State Senate Republican Office
Kim Dessert	Principal, Kearns Primary School
Kate Bogli	Parent
Mary Tabb	ECCP
Nannie Brown	Valley Preschool
Cindy Guerreri	Graustein Memorial Fund Community Liaison
Joan Rogers	Discovery and GECC Coordinator

The June 1, 2009 meeting began at 6:35 pm in the community room of the YMCA. Judi Cosgrove welcomed everyone and asked for introductions. Judi then asked if there were any additions, deletions or revisions to the minutes from the May 4, 2009 meeting. A motion was made to accept the minutes by John Kroninger, and seconded by Nannie Brown. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Brian Bergeson presented the Treasurer's Report and indicated that there is a balance of \$14,287.25 in the 09' Discovery budget.

Judi then walked Council members through the following past accomplishments of the GECC:

GECC Past Accomplishments to Date:

1. Launched a GECC web-site linked to Town/BOE web-sites with parenting and early childhood information easily available to parents.
2. Developed and printed a GECC Community Brochure.
3. Completed a parent survey to explore parent sentiment and concern on a range of early childhood

issues. The results of this survey, including all parent comments that were listed on the survey, can be viewed on the GECC website through the "Parents" link.

4. Hosted an 8 part workshop series on the CT Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Framework that was offered to childcare providers, public educators and parents over the course of the 07'- 08' school year. The workshops were geared towards improving the quality of early childhood experiences for Granby's children.

5. Secured the following grant:

An Incentive Grant from the Graustein Memorial Fund for an 8 part workshop series on the CT Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Framework that was offered to childcare providers, public educators and parents during the 07' – 08' school year.

Fiscal Year 08' – 09' GECC Accomplishments:

1. Hosted a 9 part workshop series during the 08'- 09' school year for parents and childcare providers on "Key Issues Facing Parents of Young Children in the 21st Century". These workshops were designed to empower parents as their child's first teacher, and assist providers and parents working to understand and improve kindergarten readiness. This series offered the following topical workshops:

- "Early Childhood Growth & Developmental Milestones / Special Needs Education"
- "Discipline Using Your Hearts and Your Smarts"
- "Weaving Nutritious and Delicious Foods into Literacy"
- "Math is More Than Numbers"
- "Preparing Your Child for a Hospital Experience"
- "Pediatric Dental Health Related to School Readiness"
- "Smooth Transitions: Making the Move from Little Kid to Big Kid"
- "Reading, Writing...Ready?"
- "Through the Eyes of A Child: Television, Technology and Young Children"

2. The GECC, the Superintendent, public school administrators and the preschools met to discuss ways to improve the preschool connection to the public schools. The outcome of this meeting included:

- inviting preschool teachers to attend professional development offerings within the public schools where appropriate
- arranging semi-annual meetings for the preschools and members of the school system
- organizing field trip visits for preschool teachers to visit kindergarten classes
- inviting providers to attend kindergarten orientations
- sending primary school newsletters to providers
- continuing representation of public school staff at GECC monthly meetings.

3. With assistance from the CT Center for School Change, the GECC also recently formed a Kindergarten Transition Team for the Town of Granby. The team will work to establish a coordinated kindergarten transition plan for all of Granby's children and families. The net result that the GECC expects as an outcome of this work is the development of a community-wide transition plan and communications system which is seamless. Dialog and ongoing communication will exist across the early care and public education environment. All early child care providers and parents will feel that they are part of a team, along with the public schools, which ensures that **“all children arrive at school healthy and socially and emotionally prepared for academic success and life-long learning.”**

4. Developed and posted to the GECC website the "Granby School Readiness Booklet" developed by a first grade teacher and GECC volunteer, Bonnie Quinlan.
5. Worked with GECC and GCTV volunteers in developing ongoing community programming on a wide variety of early care and education topics.
6. Secured the following grants:
 - From the Granby Education Foundation for a 3 part workshop series offering parents hands-on information on the topic of school readiness while also connecting parents to the local professionals that will continue to be available to assist them and their children, often even before their child enters the public school system. This series was offered during the 08' – 09' school year.
 - From the Corinne G. Levin Education Fund to fund 3 workshops provided by a consultant from a Family Resource Center to address some of the key issues facing parents of young learners in the 21st century. This series was offered during the 08' – 09' school year.
 - From the Corinne G. Levin Education Fund to fund 3 workshops provided by a consultant from a Family Resource Center to address several more of the topical key issues facing parents of young learners in the 21st century. This series will be offered during the 09' – 10' school year.
7. Hired a consultant to complete a feasibility study to assess community interest regarding the viability of a Family Resource Center (FRC) in Granby. This study also included concrete offers volunteered by residents in support of a FRC.
8. Responded to community input from the feasibility study by offering an 8 week Early Learning Group Series for parents/grandparents and young children. The program had initially been designed to offer two program sessions, one for children ages 1 and 2 with their parents and/or caregivers, and another for children ages 3 and 4 with their parents and/or caregivers. Classes sizes were limited to 12 children with their parents and/or caregivers, and both sessions filled up immediately once the ELGs were publicized within the community. In response to this, and with continued generosity of space by the YMCA, the GECC decided to offer two additional sessions to the children and parents and/or caregivers who were initially placed on a "wait list".
9. Offered an Early Learning **Foreign Language** Series for parents/grandparents and young children . The GECC was only able to offer one Spanish class this spring, and 7 children and their parents/grandparents were "wait listed" until fall when additional classes will be offered once again.

Following this, Sheri Litchfield outlined the GECC's future goals, asking for comments from members.

GECC Future Goals

- Continue working to increase community awareness and understanding of the importance of early child care and education in order to create a common public goal in support of this.
- Continue to work to identify appropriate existing space for establishing a Family Resource Center, and work on establishing an agreement for use of the space for this purpose. (Sheri asked that members check with their churches to see if church space might be available for the ELGs)
- Work to establish a Parents as Teachers (PAT) Pilot Program in support of parents in their role as their child's first and most influential teacher
- Beginning in fall of 09', the Council will host a new series of workshops for parents and providers on "Key Issues Facing Parents of Young Children in the 21st Century". These workshops will empower

parents as their child's first teacher, and assist parents and providers working to understand and improve kindergarten readiness in their children.

- Continue working with GECC and GCTV volunteers in developing ongoing community programming on early care and education topics.
- Make parent leadership training programs available in the 09'-10' school year to the Granby parents who have indicated that they are interested in them.
- Will be hosting a community GECC fund raising event entitled "Are You Smarter Than a Granby Student?" on September 25, 2009. (Sheri thanked Gary Ebersole for his creativity on this idea.)
- Early Learning Groups will continue for parents/grandparents/providers and young children in the 09'-10' school year.
- Early Learning Foreign Language Groups will continue for parents/grandparents/providers and young children in the 09'-10' school year.
- Continue to serve on and work with the Kindergarten Transition Team for the Town of Granby to develop a comprehensive community plan for transition to kindergarten for all of Granby's children and families.
- Provide annual presentations to the BOE and the BOS during summer of 09'.
- Make a presentation to the local Rotary scheduled for September, 09'.
- Make revisions to the GECC Community Brochure, print and distribute it throughout the community.
- Continue to seek grant funding to ensure the long term sustainability of the GECC.

Following this summary, Sheri asked for input on the 09' – 10' workshops. Mary Myers responded that the workshops offered during the 08'-09' school year by family resource director Deborah Zipkin were fabulous. The format for 09'- 10' GECC workshops and meetings was discussed. By consensus, it was agreed to eliminate the "Medleys" from next year's meetings, and that light dinners will also be eliminated in place of providing refreshments only. It was also suggested that next year's Annual Meeting involve a wine and cheese, if possible, or that this be done for a "kick off" of the 09'-10' year.

The calendar of dates presented to the membership for regular GECC meetings for FY 09'-10' was voted upon and adopted.

It was discussed that the following organizations should be contacted to discuss how the GECC can collaborate with them: The Mother's Connection, La Leche, and the Granby Newcomers.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:10 PM

Respectively submitted,
Joan Rogers, GECC Coordinator and Acting Secretary