



SD No.23 EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

Summary of Discussion

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

3:45-5:15 pm

School Board Office

Attended: Rhonda Ovelson, Caroline Noga, Catherine Disbery, Myrna Kalmakoff, Nicole Crane, Lee-Ann Tiede, Sue Bergen, Lela Ross, Vivian Evans COPAC

Absent: Cheryl Fralick, David Widdis, Rob Zoppi, Donna Kozak, Tami Ruhr

1. Policy under Review: *Policy 701 – Preschool Partnerships and Other Early Learning Childhood*

Opportunities* renamed to **701- Early Years Partnerships*

- 701 - Early Years Partnership –

PLEASE NOTE: attached policy was revised to include the aboriginal piece that was inadvertently missing
o Committee member's highlights of this policy

- Accessibility – fair and discreet processes
- Any plan of action can be developed from this policy
- How supportive this policy is for our early years programs: expanding with more school-age child care opportunities
- District providing the bricks and mortar support with very reasonable rents

o Further evolution regarding this policy

- inclusion of both StrongStart, preschool and out-of-school care
- StrongStart Facilitators work in a kindergarten class in the afternoon funded through StrongStart funding and CUPE LIF funding
 - Rhonda would love to see this expanded someday to have another caring adult in a kindergarten classroom (supported by Provincially EDI data that shows that children are needed social emotional support)

- Presentation to Education and Student Services November 4th meeting:

o Thanks for Michelle Dickie, Caroline Noga, Catherine Disbery and Donna Kozak who have volunteered to present to this committee

o A meeting to discuss how to present this policy has been scheduled on

2. How will we work together effectively to meet our mandate?

- Compass Protocol (Next Steps for us, Suggestions, Excitements, Worries)

i. Excitements:

1. Opportunity for change/action

- Policy provides for opportunities to rethink “preschool”
 - Opportunities for reducing duplication of services through integration to better serve families
 - Past successes and new potential for growth
 - A committee that is developing an action plan
 - How much this integration helps out children and families
 - True collaborative partnership- expanding/enhancing/amplifying support
2. Emphasis on supportive transition
 - Thinking about the transition between pre-school to kindergarten. What does that look like?
 - More opportunities for little ones and their families
 - Expanding partnerships (eg Mother Goose program)
 - Very encouraging to connect with education
 3. Support and honor diversity
 - Policy supports/honors diversity
 - Opportunities for parents to help guide decision making and implementation

ii. Suggestions

1. Community
 - Consult the community for next steps
 - Survey parents as to their needs regarding transitions
 - It would be helpful to build relationships by interacting in different settings
 - Meeting families where they are – interacting in safe places
2. Educating parents
 - Early primary open houses
3. Vision the future
 - Don’t be shy – promote in the community more
 - Review duplication/overlap of committees to increase partnership, shared funding, and accessibility for families
 - Outdoor preschools? What is this vision?

- Think Little Think Big committee – utilizing that steering committee
4. Preschools
 - Weekly/monthly pre-school story times during the day
 - Weekly/monthly preschool activities in the gym or on the field or playground
 5. School/kindergarten
 - Continuation of ELFF events
 - Revisit (include parent input) kindergarten gradual entry practices (length of time/# of supporting adults)

iii. Worries

1. How do we identify and engage all families in the different communities (eg. Vulnerable; geographical, etc)
 - Finding the vulnerable families
 - Need to focus on all of Central Okanagan not central Kelowna
 - What about the kinds not going to preschool or daycare. How do we connect with them?
2. Early years development promotion
 - Hard to improve awareness of particular issues in early years development
3. Layers of bureaucracy that impede, or slows down the process (compounded, multiple funders/partners/mandates)
 - Develop MCFD liaison
 - SD 23 policies conflicting with community collaboration
4. Funding, time and resources – duplication of meetings with similar topics
 - Duplication of efforts re: other committees – too many meetings for members
 - Time, money, resources to ensure all voices can be captured in design of vision
 - Funding (eg TOC costs)

iv. Next steps

1. Reaching out to government members
 - Meet with MP Fuhr to familiarize him with our committee and its work in the district; see what his government has in store for preschool aged children and also enquire about getting more funding for preschool

2. Transition into formal schooling

- Vision around transition. What do safe seamless transition look/sound like?
- Revisit ELFF format
- Connecting K teachers with the pre-school and StrongStart community

3. Collaboration with other early years organizations

- Communicate mandate with affinity groups: CATCH, Child Care Committee, Family Hub, Child Care Society
- Identify overlap of committees to identify existing programs to promote working together

4. Continued relationship building

- Committee represent opportunity for everyone to share information openly to build relationships
- Create sub-committees and working partnerships
- Identify & problem-solve possible barriers to communication among partners

5. Efficient use of space

- Scope out new potential locations for new programs
- run a preschool beside the Play School at RSS that is currently run by Brenda Appel, RSS teacher

6. Cultural inclusivity and identity

- Ensure cultural safety and inclusiveness

7. Prioritize

- What are the top priorities in guiding principles?
- Prioritize on what we might want to take on: marinate on how we want to focus our energies (actionable work)

3. NEWS to Share

- The Central Okanagan Family Hub update from Myrna
 - o Currently applying for funding grants to:
 - Early Years Centre funding through the Provincial Office for the Early Years and also looking at the Central Okanagan United Way and Central Okanagan Foundation
 - o Have begun a community consultation process with three 4th year nursing students to consult with parents in the Rutland area regarding what they would like to see offered at the Hub
 - o The hub will be located at Pearson Road Elementary school
 - o Committee is looking for ways to advertise using social media, poster campaign, and attending conferences

- Suggestion from Vivian Hughes, COPAC member at large, to contact the COPAC President regarding their November 14th COPAC Fall Leadership Conference to set up a booth
- Pearson Hub will have some aboriginal programming to support aboriginal families in the Rutland community
- Westbank First Nation Aboriginal Hub
 - The hub is a good start to build stronger partnerships in the community
 - Westbank First Nation is already addressing health and prenatal support for the aboriginal community
 - They currently don't have strong connections with the education system but they are working with Joanne DeGuevara, District Principal of Aboriginal Education
 - Grad rates have been slowly rising but are well below non-aboriginal students
- COPAC
 - Nov 14 COPAC Fall Leadership Conference regional conference
 - Keynote speaker: Amanda Swoboda, from Canadian Mental Health
 - Topic will be *Building the Bounce Back Kid – building resiliency in your children*
 - 9:00 to 3:00 p.m. – location TBD
- Physical Literacy update with Michelle Dickie
 - *Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.*
 - <http://www.physicalliteracy.ca/news/canada%E2%80%99s-physical-literacy-consensus-statement>
 - Pacific Sport invited some community partners to attend a preconference regarding physical literacy with guest speaker Dr. Dean Kriellaars
 - <http://www.physicalliteracy.ca/node/48>
 - Kelowna Child Care Society is developing a partnership with Pacific Sport to do training for ECE and ECD
 - Rhonda informed the group that Vianne Kintzinger, Director of Instruction, who oversees the Health Promoting Schools Team is involved with physical literacy for our district
- KCSS/Okanagan College research partnership
 - A business honor student will be doing research regarding childcare providers
 - Decision Statement: How can Central Okanagan childcare providers increase the retention of workers in the childcare industry?
 - Research Objectives:

- RO1: Identify the motivating factors for childcare workers to stay within the industry
- RO2: Describe the workload of childcare workers employed by Central Okanagan childcare providers
- RO3: Determine the level of job satisfaction experienced by childcare workers employed by Central Okanagan childcare providers
- RO4: Identify what advancement opportunities exist for childcare workers in the Central Okanagan.
- **Moe the Mouse – Catherine Disbery**
 - o Is an oral language program developed by the BC Aboriginal Childcare Society
 - o It is culturally-based and used for speech and language development for aboriginal children
- **Mother Goose program – Caroline Noga**
 - o This program is offered at no cost for parents and their babies and young children. It introduces adults and children to the pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs, and stories together
 - o The Clubhouse offers the Mother Goose programs are the following locations: Rutland Knights of Columbus Hall, Clubhouse at Ellison Elementary and the Clubhouse at Sutherland
 - o For more information regarding this program please call Sheree at (250) 762-4476

REMINDERS: PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATES FOR OUR MEETINGS

Meeting dates: 2015-2016			
Oct 20	Jan 26	Apr 19	Jun 14

