



## CENTRAL OKANAGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

### Summary of Discussion

Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2016,  
3:45pm-5:15pm  
School Board Office

**In Attendance:** Cheryl Fralick, Sue Bergen, Rhonda Ovelson, Nicole Crane, Catherine Disbery, Tami Ruhr, Lee-Ann Tiede, Michelle Dickie, Myrna Kalmakoff, David Widdis, Donna Kozak, Amanda Turner

**Regrets:** Rolli Cacchioni, Vivian Hughes

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - Our vision is for every child to be well supported through the early years.
  - Our focus is on transition from home to Kindergarten.
2. Spirals of Inquiry – How might we re-imagine transition from home to school?
  - Children's needs:
    - 3-4 year olds have passion and curiosity for learning.
    - They need social connections with peers.
    - Children need an opportunity to build relationships (familiarity).
    - Children need to know the expectations of their school.
    - Children need child-led learning.
    - Teachers need to know their students' interests and build from there.
      - Child-led, child-centred learning allows the child to follow their passions.
    - Children need a sense of purpose.
    - Children need to be known and accepted for *who* they are.
    - Children need familiarity with the physical environment (place).
    - Children need to be able to predict and connect with schedules and people.
    - Children need to connect with their teachers.
    - Children need care and nurturing from adults in their life.
    - Children need the adults in their life to demonstrate/model curiosity about the world.
  - Parents need to know:
    - Who their child's teacher is; where their child will be.
    - That their child will be understood and accepted as an individual.
    - Parents need to get to know the teacher.
      - There has to be opportunities for the teacher and for the parents to get to know each other.
      - There has been a disconnect with the online registration.
        - There is no direct feedback with the online process.
          - Possibly a feedback loop through the online process that explains what the next steps are.
            - Parents would like to know when, where and how.
    - It would be ideal for upcoming K students to know who their teachers are in June.

- This is not possible as things change over the summer.
  - If there are changes, it can be difficult for the parents and for the student to accept.
    - It could prove to be a bigger disappointment.
  - Parents would like to know a school's schedule ahead of time.
    - They would like to know what to expect the 1<sup>st</sup> day, the 1<sup>st</sup> week...
    - There needs to be greater communication with parents.
  - Parents need to connect with other parents (PAC) to support each other.
    - They need parent to parent opportunities.
  - Possibly, the community partnerships could be a part of this.
    - We could create another check box for the community.
      - What are the needs of the community?
        - I.e. Daycares
  - Parents really want their child understood, accepted and their own parent knowledge of the child to be accepted.
    - Parents need the respect as an expert on their child.
  - Parents worry for their child's well-being.
    - There needs to be trust to ensure their child will be safe and cared for.
    - This is an excellent reminder as we can take some things for granted.
      - As educators, we have to check our assumptions.
        - We *think* we are communicating, but *are* we communicating?
  - A parent's **first** child entering public school for the **first** time is affected by the parent's **first** experience at school.
- What does school readiness mean for care providers and early learning educators?
  - How do you prepare children for kindergarten?
  - This could cause judgements
    - What is the daycare providing for K readiness?
      - How do you build a child's listening stamina?
      - When and how do you initiate the conversation about kindergarten?
      - What does school readiness mean to you?
        - What does it look like?
        - What does it feel like?
          - Fine motor/gross motor
          - Social responsibility
  - There could be knowledge from the school to assist with preparing the future K's.

### 3. Think LITTLE 2 Think BIG

- There is no "right" answer for K transitioning.
- A kindergarten orientation in the Spring is *not* transitioning.
- Some parents like half days for transition.
- Some parents prefer a day here and a day there until they feel their child was comfortable.
- We need to be flexible for families as everyone has such different needs.
- The "Hands Up Program" at PSE was very successful.
  - The program ran for 8 weeks, twice a week for two hours.

- PSE had almost all of their pre-K students attend.
        - These students got used to the school, the gym, the playground, where to go to the bathroom, the sound of the bell...
        - The children became attached to each other; they saw familiar faces.
      - The program was successful because there was collaboration and facilitation of a team (K teachers and StrongStart Facilitators).
        - How can we provide the same opportunity for other schools that are not connected to a StrongStart facility?
4. Transition Information Pamphlet – Collaborative Project
- We are questioning assumptions and trying to pull in the new curriculum to determine what students need to be successful.
    - We need a holistic look at the entire child.
  - The pamphlet focuses on the language from the competency perspective.
    - There is so much information that it is great to develop a pamphlet that is universal in our district – for parents, child and childcare providers.
    - The pamphlet is strength focused.
      - The school will embrace the child for who they are.
      - A connection from an aboriginal perspective through graphics to tie competencies is being explored.
        - Possibly, the medicine wheel could be incorporated.
      - The hopes are that the pamphlet will address the needs for a successful transition.
      - It would be ideal for the pamphlet to be ready for when parents register in February.
      - The pamphlet will be taken back to the various community partners to get another set of eyes and perspectives.
      - Time needs to be taken to ensure the pamphlet is exactly what is needed to reach our parents, caregivers and care providers.
5. Upcoming events and news
- National Day of the Child is Nov. 15 [Register here!](#)
  - Unplug and Play Week January 2017
  - Presenter Lenore Skenazy author of "Free Range Kids", explores the possible dangers of being helicopter parents – January 2017
  - Catherine Disbery will share the research on the program for Aboriginal Fathers.
  - June 2017, 22 qualified ECE student s will be graduating from OC.