

Hampton and Scotland School Readiness Council
Tuesday, October 29, 2024

In-Person at Hampton Elementary School
Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Scott Sears, Joy Becker, Ann Knowles, Victoria Smith, Rose Bisson, Andrea Kaye, Brittany Santiago (virtually), Terry Surprenant

1) Call to order: Joy called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Vikki introduced herself to the role of interim principal at HES and was welcomed to the council. Members thanked Joy for bringing snacks!

2) Audience for citizens: None in attendance.

3) Adjustments to agenda: None

4) Approval of September 24, 2024 meeting minutes: The minutes were approved as written with one abstention by Brittany.

5) Acceptance of financial reports

a. Hampton: Rose moved to accept Hampton's financial report. Scott seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion passed.

b. Scotland: Scott moved to accept Scotland's financial report. Rose seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion passed.

6) School Readiness Quality Components.

A list of the 11 components listed in the grant was provided to Vikki. Terry suggested a focus on two at this meeting:

1. Community Partnerships

i) Terry shared flyers in English and Spanish from the Early Head Start Home Based program with the administrators along with income eligibility information. She suggested that this resource be shared with the programs' social workers so referrals can be made if any families with expectant moms or younger siblings might need extra parenting support.

2. Family Education and Literacy

i) Terry had attempted to reach out to the new librarian at Fletcher Memorial Library but learned that position is now vacant. Andrea explained that she is on the board and is able to serve as liaison to the school on matters related to the library. She offered to connect with Vikki to plan for joint activities and field trips.

7) Program updates:

Classroom updates were received from both programs and placed within the shared folder before the meeting for members to view.

Scotland

Principal Ann Knowles shared:

- 17 children currently enrolled with another starting next week which will fill all 18 spaces. There are 7 children in the pre-K (4's) classroom and 11 in the preschool (3's.)
- The preschool has been focused on themes related to the fall weather. They recently experienced field trips to an orchard and bison farm.
- In their second year with the afterschool grant, SES has been able to provide several family events.
- SES hosted a Health and Wellness event for families on Saturday Oct 19th from 10:00 – 1:00. Many vendors were present. It was open to Hampton and Chaplin as well. 78 people were in attendance. There were giveaways including books, activities for children, and the fire department brought a truck. The Eastern Health District provided flu and Covid vaccines. Terry shared information about navigating technology with children. The SES staff learned about regional resources along with families and Ann will be highlighting one in each of her newsletters that go out to families every two weeks.
- The Generations dental van was on site recently and provided cleanings for children and adults. They accept insurance but provide free care for those without. They also allowed children to visit the van to help them be more familiar for when they return in 6 months.
- Fire Prevention week brought a fire department visit.
- There will be a Halloween event at the school – children are able to wear costumes (sans masks) and participate in a school-wide parade.

Hampton

Interim Principal, Vikki Smith shared:

- The preschool has been doing activities with pumpkins for a focus on science inquiry.
- Fire prevention experiences included a fire drill on Vikki's first day (in the rain!)
- HES hosted a recent vaccine clinic.
- For Oct 31st, the school will have an orange and black spirit day and a preschool parade.
- An after school grant was recently awarded. They are working on staffing.
- Terry and Patrice collaborated through a GEER grant to bring a presentation to families on the topic of navigating technology with young children on Oct 1st. Three parents attended the talk. Staff provided child care and dinner was served.
- Family Friday activities are on hold while the BoE explores safety issues around need for background checks for adult volunteers.

SRC members discussed this issue at length. Terry reminded that SR requires an “open door” policy for all preschool parents/guardians. Ann was asked about Scotland's policy. Family members are welcome in the school at SES and never alone with children – there is always a teacher present in the classroom. Also, during field trips, every preschooler is required to have an adult family member present. Ann said that this has not been an issue and all are able to participate. It

was agreed that children would not be excluded if a family was unable to attend. Joy suggested that a child could be assigned to a staff member in that case.

8) SR Liaison report

Cost of Care figures for preschool were calculated by each program:

Scotland: \$339.53 per child (Increase from last time reported – due to increase to two classrooms with smaller group sizes and fewer children per teacher.)

Hampton: \$235 per child (Similar to last year.)

EASTCONN will be collaborating with Scotland in December when Terry will present on early literacy for families. This activity is funded through the after school grant. It will occur at the Scotland library and will include a local author visit.

- a. **OEC updates** Terry shared that the OEC is planning for the transition from *School Readiness* to *Early Start CT (ESCT)* which will go into effect on July 1st 2025. They have been receiving input from liaisons and other stakeholders. We don't know yet whether SR Councils will be utilized as the local governance partners or if new groups will be formed, but there is a commitment to including those with the knowledge of their local communities. Current council members' experience and continued involvement will be crucial for a successful transition. As updates become available, they will be posted on the OEC website: <https://www.ctoec.org/early-start-ct/>
- b. **Monitoring** Terry completed site visits this month. She observed in classrooms at both schools, reviewed files, and met with administrators. She found both programs to be in good order. In Scotland there was a focus on professional development planning for staff. Ann shared that there are new required PD topics this year and it is getting more challenging to find time for meaningful professional learning. In Hampton, Terry helped Vikki to begin learning about the School Readiness requirements.

9) **New Business:** None

10) **Old Business:** None.

11) **Audience for citizens:** None in attendance.

12) **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Scott at 7:23 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting – November 26th Via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by Teresa Surprenant, Hampton and Scotland School Readiness Liaison
These minutes are unofficial until approved at the next School Readiness Council Meeting