

Hampton and Scotland School Readiness Council
Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023

Zoom Meeting Minutes

Zoom Recording:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/arUO-LsPFTHE9EgWpaEGjiNtXrLUU9xnyLDAI8mlYJNHNBmmdYeWTjibacoCwjCd.nzFH-q337eh1oyt->

Passcode: Qu^th40H

Attendance: Scott Sears, Joy Becker, Ann Knowles, Patrice Merendina, Valerie Bruneau, Andrea Kaye, Geri White, Mary Geragotelis, Rose Bisson, Brittany Santiago, Terry Surprenant

- 1) **Call to order:** Scott called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.
- 2) **Audience for citizens:** None in attendance.
- 3) **Adjustments to agenda:** None
- 4) **Approval of May 30, 2023 meeting minutes:** Joy moved to approve the minutes. Geri seconded the motion. No discussion. Scott and Valerie abstained. Motion passed.
- 5) **Acceptance of financial reports**
 - a. **Hampton:** Geri moved to accept Hampton's financial report. Joy seconded the motion. No discussion. Valerie abstained. Motion passed.
 - b. **Scotland:** Mary moved to accept Scotland's financial report. Geri seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed.
- 6) **Program updates:**

Classroom updates were placed within the shared drive before the meeting for members to view.

Scotland

Principal Ann Knowles shared:

- There are 21 children enrolled. 20 in attendance; one pending a physical. (Only 17 are in School Readiness spaces.)
- Opened a second classroom. One room has 3-year-olds with Carol Sweat continuing as teacher and new room has 4-year-olds with Jessica Allaire (formerly the Kindergarten teacher). Both teachers are certified in early childhood and meet the requirement for *Qualified Staff Member (QSM)*.
- Preschool now has smaller group sizes (presently 8 children with one adult and 12 children with 2 adults).
- Recent field trip to the orchard with family members in attendance.
- Back to School Open House for all children and families.
- Generations of Love – special family members joined children for lunch.
- Working on self-study for reaccreditation this year. Both teachers are experienced with this process and program is working with EASTCONN *Accreditation Quality Improvement Support (AQIS)* specialist.
- Looking to increase community outreach this year. Will continue current collaborations including with the public library. Eastern Highland Health District is scheduled to provide a flu vaccine clinic for children ages 4 - 18 on Tuesday Oct 3rd. Hampton was invited to participate.

- New Kindergarten teacher, Claudia Mendoza.

Mary Geragotelis, Director, Scotland Public Library shared:

- Story time will resume Thursdays at 10:00
- Many activities for all ages available <https://scotlandpubliclibrary.org/what-s-happening> including art journaling, a book club (share with Canterbury Public Library), a building class (kids create with Legos or other building supplies) and a Halloween party planned for Oct 28
- Looking for a Poet Laureate

Hampton

(Welcome new principal, Patrice Merendina!) She shared:

- There are 13 children enrolled plus one will be starting in December.
- First week of school – Meet and Greet for families with a classroom visit and bus ride.
- Sept 7th Open House for the entire school.
- Professional development – time and funds to support teachers to use the Heggerty Pre K (early literacy skills) Program aligned to the district’s use of Science of Reading.
- The Lion’s Club recently completed vision screenings for all preschoolers, all students will learn about fire safety with the local fire department, and there is a continuing partnership with the public library. Working to build relationships within the community and to expand collaborations this year.

7) SR Liaison report

a. OEC updates

- i) Reallocation of funds: We requested a return of Scotland’s one space since they already have more than 18 children enrolled. We can also work towards a return of Hampton’s for the next quarter.
- ii) Kindergarten entry date change of eligibility – beginning in 2024, a child will need to turn 5 on or before Sept 1st to be eligible to enter Kindergarten. During the last council meeting we discussed the SR policy allowing (no more than 5% of preschool class enrollment) K-eligible children to be held back for an additional year of preschool when parents request. Next year we may experience the opposite; the law allows school districts to grant a family’s request to admit a younger child if an assessment completed by the school determines admitting the child to kindergarten would be developmentally appropriate. More information from the CT Dept. of Ed. <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2023-24/New-Kindergarten-Age-Information-72423.pdf>. EASTCONN will be hosting a community conversation – [Unpacking the New Kindergarten Entry Age & What it Means to your Program or District](#) – for administrators on Oct 16th 8:30 – 10:00 AM to discuss the implications of this change.
- iii) Attendance requirement has changed. Children cannot be counted as eligible for SR funds for that space if more than 2 months with only 1 day in attendance.
- iv) Cost of Care – Fiscal coordinators have calculated their overall costs for preschool. There are various formulas that can be used to arrive at this figure. Terry will talk to administrators about the per child cost to share with families.
 - Scotland - \$190,657 (2 classrooms, 21 children)
 - Hampton - \$125,655 (one classroom, 14 children)

v) The OEC is hosting a virtual session **An overview of School Readiness** on Tuesday Oct 17th 2 – 3:30. Topics include: funding requirements; roles of the liaison, council, and fiscal agent; and resources available for programs and families. Council Chairs are strongly encouraged to attend. All Council Members are welcome. Meeting link will be forthcoming.

b. Support for Administrators

Terry has met with each principal to plan for the upcoming year. There are many requirements of this grant and it's a challenge for administrators to manage. Terry is planning to create a booklet with all of the pieces in one place.

8) School Readiness Quality Components

a. Community Collaboration – Terry will support the principals to generate a list of potential community partners for outreach. Collaborations can be regional and go beyond the towns of Hampton and Scotland.

b. Family Engagement – Terry suggested that principals send an email invitation a week before each SRC meeting to all preschool families. In-person meetings at the schools and/or connecting to other events may entice more family participation. Scotland will send out a flyer including families for the upcoming in-person meeting at Scotland Elementary School on Tuesday Oct 24th. Meeting will be hybrid with virtual option in the library.

2) **New Business:** None

3) **Old Business:** None

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

5) **Agenda for next meeting:** Focus on increasing meeting attendance.

6) **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Geri at 7:06 PM and seconded by Ann. The motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting – October 24th 2023.

In person at Scotland Elementary School with a virtual option 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