

Dear Council Member,

Last week we had a very exciting, informative meeting. I wanted to update you on several important topics that we discussed.

First and foremost, next years grant and budget was presented. I am very happy to provide you with a copy of this proposal, and would welcome your request to receive it by email. You may also stop in and pick up a copy at the SPF Office at the Wing School. I am happy to answer any questions, and even happier to obtain your signature for its submission.

Next, I would like to update you on initiatives for families. We are planning a month long celebration of April as The Month of The Young Child. There will be an extensive calendar available to families with many offerings throughout our community and even the region, all low-cost or no cost. April Vacation Week (April 16-23rd) is also Screen-Free Week, where families are encouraged to limit T.V., Video game and computer usage. This calendar should support parents who would like to engage their children in non-media activities! While many of these offerings are with Community Partners, we have our Discovery Center Birthday Party to kick-off the celebration with Mother Goose herself! This singing, guitar strumming, nursery rhyming performer will entertain families on Saturday, April 16th at 10:30, at the Sandwich Library. Registration is on-line at the www.sandwichpubliclibrary.com address, on the event keeper link on March 16.

Families may choose to bring an unwrapped birthday gift for a homeless child to jump-start our Birthday-In-A-Bag "Present Pantry" to this event. Complete with gifts, party goods, cake, and even a pinwheel, our first bag was sent off last month to a 4 year old, with the help of our neighbors at the Food Pantry, Council On Aging, and Headstart.

We will also be kicking off our "Welcome Baby!" Bags to families with a new arrival here in Sandwich. All items to be included need to be received by the end of the month (ask Lauren for details). The Lola at the Library books for the Food Pantry will also be available to their clients this month, with an invitation to attend Mother Goose.

Two other important resources for families- the Hyannis WIC Office is having an Open House for everyone who would like to stop in and see their location. (See flyer). Thanks to Valerie Brown from WIC who introduced us to the Angel Food Ministries program. This no eligibility, affordable food program is available to everone, but located mid-Cape. Wouldn't it be great if we could get an Upper Cape site- or even one in Sandwich? Check it out online!

There are several changes to Kindergarten Registration this year. On March 15 from 9:30-11, and on March 21st, from 4-7, parents and children can go to their neighborhood school to be greeted by the principal, see a kindergarten classroom, meet the nurse and complete the paperwork. Packets can be picked up at the schools ahead of time, and returned then or done on site. See Flyer.

Preschool screenings are also upcoming- see flyer for details.

The following information is specifically for Early Education and Care professionals:

Enclosed in this mailing you will find a response sheet to several events. Please RSVP at your earliest opportunity, so that we may reserve space for you.

The "Closing the Early Literacy Gap" Professional Development Series. This is open to all Sandwich teachers and providers at no cost. Please plan to attend the introductory session on March 22nd if at all possible.

An on-line course will be offered next year on some elements of this grant, for providers who are unable to attend this 4-6 time frame. We will be scheduling a technical assistance workshop for Family Child Care providers on this subject at a later date.

I will also be offering a 15 hour (1.5 CEU) training on social-emotional behavior of young children. This has a \$25 cost by EEC, and must be accessed through their professional development calendar (let me know if you need help registering). Registration will open by March 14th. We will meet Saturday, April 30th from 9:30-4:30, and then Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:30 on May 12, 19, & 26 at the Sandwich Library.

There will be a special Discovery Center concert on Friday April 15th, featuring Courtney Harrington-Bailey from 10-11 a.m. We hope you will plan to bring your center-based program to enjoy this rollicking good sing-along at the Sandwich Library.

For Family Child Care, we will celebrate at our monthly program at the Council On Aging, on Wed. May 14th, at 10:30. This show is more appropriate for younger and multi-age groups than the show on April 15th.

On Wed. May 11th, please plan to bring your Prekindergarten children to our annual "Bus For Us" event at the Sandwich Library. Get on aboard at 9:30! Don't miss the bus- RSVP today.

For Families and Teachers

The Sandwich Reads Together! Committee is finalizing details for a special storytelling event for Prek-2 children during the day, and teachers in the early evening on Wed. April 20th. Stay tuned for more at www.sandwichreadstogether.org, but pencil in the date!

Thank you for all you do to support the work of the Sandwich Partnership. A special thanks this month to Marie Hayes, who volunteers in the office, and Chris Hallas, our Early Childhood Specialist, who both give so generously of their time. This month especially, they kept us "up and running" while I was "down and out" with illness!

Final Council Meeting of the year is May 5th - a celebration of where we've been, and a vision of where we're going! Once again, we plan to recognize the contributions of council members who are "moving on" with a social event before! Happy Spring!