

Bright Starts Cooperative Early Learning Centre Board Meeting

Tuesday, December 13, 2022, 8:00pm

Chairperson: Robilyn Vanos

Videoconference

In attendance: Robilyn Vanos, Karen Hinnigan, Stacey Reid, Edwin Ng, Mariam Hassan, Michelle Bauer, Eleanor Doe, Avery Au, Anthony Oyeyi, Emily Kozlowski, Jessica Achebe, Angie Docking

Regrets: Sarah Wytsma, Lula Woldemariam, Julia Metelka

Meeting called to order @ 8:02pm

Motion to approve agenda

- Moved by Michelle
- Seconded by Mariam
- All in favour, none opposed
- Motion carried

Motion to approve October minutes

- Moved by Eleanor
- Seconded by Micelle
- 7 in favour, 1 abstention, none opposed
- Motion carried

Executive Director's report

Financial

- Confirmed regional/ministry funding – approx. \$86K
- This includes operating funding, \$1/hr wage grant (including kitchen and admin staff) which will be retroactive to Jan 1st, 2022
- Staff have now received their retroactive enhanced wages in their paycheques
- Also have received funding for play-based materials – approx. \$68K
- Confirmed \$52K in CWELCC funding which is meant to full the gaps for the budget
- Also applying to the enhanced staffing sustainability grant is available, which is for staff in an enhanced staffing role (i.e., above ratio staff who are there to support students, and not in budget as cost covered by the Provincial Wage Enhancement Grant)
- Parent fee schedule for 2023 has been updated to be reduced by 37% (up from previously announced 25%) in Jan. 2023
- Next fee reduction is scheduled for 2024

Health & safety

- Centre has had 3 positive cases since last meeting in Oct. 2022
- Screening tool has been updated to align with recent recommendations from the Chief Officer of Health; it now recommends children from 2-4 wearing a mask.
- Stacey recommends not enforcing children over 2 to wear a mask in BSCELC but will communicate with families that they are welcome to send their children with masks if they so choose. She plans to send out an email about this change shortly.
- Stacey strongly recommending that staff wear masks and suggest parents wear masks in Bright Starts, too (which will be included in Stacey's parent email)

- Board is supportive of not enforcing mask-wearing for children and of strongly recommending staff/parents mask-wearing
 - Question - does the University's mask-wearing policies affect Bright Starts? Stacey - we aren't directly impacted by University of Waterloo policies.
- Stacey notes colds, flus, etc. is quite high, more than usual (pre-pandemic times)
- BSCELC recent had a health & safety inspection; only a few small items noted as needed to be repaired and Plant Ops did them the next day.
- Stacey notes isolation for vomiting and diarrhea protocol remains 48 hours before the child returns.
- An enteric outbreak is categorized by 2 children (grouped by rooms sharing washrooms) and vomiting/diarrhea; staff would remove sensory play, stuffed animals, etc. from those rooms while outbreak is occurring.

Enrollment

- 100% full in Dec. 2022, Jan. 2023

Staffing

- A Preschool 1 teacher will not be returning after their maternity leave ends in Jan. 2023
- Plans in motion to reintroduce Preschool 6, to move older children into a class to help promote movement within the centre. It was last offered it in 2020 before COVID
- Hoping to start with 8 children in Mar. and add another 8 in May = 16 children
- Will remain open until Sept. 2023
- Stacey is confirming staffing in the new year for this program

Other

- 2 of 3 lofts now installed! Preschool 5 + infant room most recently installed
- Stacey shared some photos of the lofts
- There was a guest presentation for preschoolers re: music around the world in the fall; the same presenter recently came back and did a presentation for the toddlers. Stacey plans to have him back next year as a presenter as they were very happy with the results.

Funfair

- Carnival-like event, used to be a fundraiser
- Thinking we'd like to do that again in June - does the Board have any thoughts on this as an event idea?
- Board agrees we should go for it.

Treasurer's report

- Oct. 2022 report
 - Rebates were paid out in October, shown as negative revenue in report
 - Revenue is lower which reflects lower fees
 - Payroll and other expenses are close to budget
- Nov. 2022 report
 - Skewed due to the retroactive wage enhancement + the gap funding
 - Presents over-budget on revenue; payroll and expenses are tracking close to budget (showing small surplus in Nov. 2022)
- Year to date – we close to breaking even, which is great given our deficit budget

- o To note – funding to replace the reduced fees has already come in, so the Dec. picture will likely not be as rosy.

2023 budget presentation

Background

- 2022 budget made significant investments in staff and quality of care, above and beyond what have normally been introduced; staff have been appreciative of these efforts (staff childcare discount, additional COVID-drive relief staff, adjusted vacation policy and pay scale that rewards continued service, and 4.19% COLA).
- 2022 budget net income of \$-163,194 after 6.5% parent fee increase for 2022; 2022 deficit budget approved based on the assumption that we would adjust for inflation 2.5% and increase parent fees by 6.5% year over year would result in a small surplus in 2024.
- With our participation in CWELCC, we no longer can increase parent fees to follow the path set out in our 3-year budget.
- Also, CWELCC participation creates stipulations on funding uses and staff salary levels.

To consider for 2023 budget lines

- Payroll expenses - historically, staff wages on average increase 1.5% based on salary scale progression + a COLA % increase to previous year's salary (final is a max of either scale increase or COLA). Even before factoring in a COLA increase, staff are already on track to receive a 7.6% salary increase in 2023 on average from regional wage grants + additional CWELCC \$1/hr + salary scale increases (if needed). Full breakdown is as follows:
 - Newer hires at lower wages – approx. 10%
 - Office staff above salary scale (+ not CWELCC funding eligible) – approx. 3%
 - Other staff – 6%
- Revenue – fees split between parent revenue and CWELCC, Region funding (which will cover mandated salary increases) + approx. \$21K expected interest income from GIC investments (up over projected \$1K in previous 3-yr budget)
- General and admin expenses – an increase of 12% over 2022 budget is expected (insurance, food, janitorial, rent, audit fees, accounting fees, staff recognition, tech)

2023 budget recommendations

- Finance committee's recommendation: in place of COLA, increase annual performance bonus total pot by \$8K to \$32K, which results in \$200 additional performance bonus per employee
- Without additional COLA, net income = \$-96,072
- Emily/Stacey note there is another teleconference tomorrow where they will know more about regional funding that could come down the pipe; however, we must remind ourselves that deficit budgets were rare, and this type of deficit is unsustainable if we record a -\$100K budget year after year. This should remain top-of-mind as we navigate budget planning post- CWELCC.

Discussion/questions on budget presentation:

- Board congratulates Emily and thanks her / Finance committee for preparing a thorough and thoughtful presentation.
- What will staff perception be on no COLA increase? Stacey - with new pay scale added last year and the unknowns of CWELCC, staff are expecting there will be changes to their salary. Will need

to let staff know we won't really be controlling salary adjustments year over year now that we fall under CWELCC funding.

- Why the recommendation to increase the performance enhancement pot by \$8K specifically? Emily – with additional \$8k, staff would receive an extra \$200 in performance bonus, which seemed to be enough to make it a meaningful (and noticeable) increase for staff. Also notes the recommendation behind keeping/enhancing the staff performance bonus is because they've historically received one and it would be noticeable if it were removed + incentives providing quality care.
- When do staff typically receive COLA increases and performance bonuses? Stacey - performance bonuses happen in Dec., COLA increases have historically happened in Jan.

Motion to increase the performance bonus total pot by \$8,000 (for a total pot of \$32,000) in 2022.

- Moved by Emily
- Seconded by Avery
- All in favour, no oppositions, no abstentions
- Motion carried

Good news roundtable

- Robilyn began a new job!
- Emily's class exam went very well!
- Tony received his Canadian citizenship!
- Stacey's son is graduating from his fire fighting program!

New business

- Next meeting (Jan. 17) will be in-person.

Regrets

- N/A

Motion to adjourn

- Moved by Emily
- Seconded by Mariam
- All in favour, no oppositions, no abstentions
- Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.