

# College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center Advisory Council

## Meeting Minutes – September 7, 2023 – Virtual Meeting

### Opening

Sarah called CHECLC Advisory Council meeting to order at 5:03PM on Thursday, September 7, 2023.

### Present

Joseph Brasfield                      Sarah Garland (Principal)                      Erynn Mathews-Davis (Instructional Coach)  
Samantha McMahan (Secretary)                      Andy Navratil                      Lauren Shumaker                      Asia Sylvest  
Mercy Udoji                      Garrett Womble

### 1. Welcome and Introductions (Sarah; SEE APPENDIX 1)

Sarah opened the meeting and welcomed this year's AC members. All members, both new and returning, introduced themselves and explained their reasons for wanting to serve on the AC.

### 2. Chair and District Representative (Sarah; SEE APPENDIX 1)

Sarah explained the duties of both the AC Chair and its District Representative and asked for any members interested in either position to contact her via email.

### 3. Council Member Role and Responsibilities (Sarah; SEE APPENDIX 1)

Sarah reviewed the duties of an AC member, including the AC Norms. She further reviewed AC Highlights regarding past achievements. We also had a chance to review the Parent Norms that were devised by the AC (SEE APPENDIX 2). In addition, we touched on the School Improvement Plan where Sarah explained the 3 pillars upon which the SIP is based. Finally, we looked ahead at potential AC work areas intended for the coming year.

### 4. School Improvement Plan (Sarah; SEE APPENDIX 3)

Sarah shared more detail regarding the three pillars of the SIP:

1. Racial Equity – looking at education through an equity lens;
2. Accelerating Student Learning – with a focus on obtaining growth for all students; and
3. Positive Climate and Culture – this is the parent engagement piece.

In order to reach the goals of the SIP, data is gathered at the beginning of the year and analyzed, then there is a mid-year check-in in January, and finally a year-end assessment to see whether or not CHECLC met their SIP goals. With respect to advancing racial equity, the school is seeking growth with classroom practices and has a self-assessment next week.

Regarding accelerated student learning, this year CHECLC is using a new universal screener that has more domains than the one previously used. Initial data has been gathered and analyzed which led to advanced screens that will be wrapped up next week resulting in more data for analysis.

As for building a positive climate and culture, the parent engagement piece, **please review the “parent engagement opportunities” link in APPENDIX 3** for a detailed list of events/actions that will be incorporated this year to foster a closer relationship between the school and its stakeholders.

Sarah invited questions and Merci asked if the data that was and is being gathered for accelerated student learning could be shared with parents. Erynn suggested that she present this information in a coffee chat form to review how/why the data is gathered, i.e. making this a parent education opportunity. Sarah added that last year Erynn had also given a presentation on Instructional Norms, i.e. what CHECLC does and does not teach. This will be repeated as a further parent education opportunity this year. Likewise, the series of talks regarding Conscious Discipline is going to be offered again this year (**details of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting can be found in the most recent CHECLC Newsletter**).

### 5. Budget Presentation (Sarah; SEE APPENDIX 4)

Sarah explained that CHECLC is not self-sufficient. The school receives approximately \$400,000 from the District. The school's operations and costs come in around \$160,000. We reviewed the current budget breakdown, highlighting the issues of the high credit card machine costs, as well as high nutritional costs. The District is looking for CHECLC to generate money, hence, through the work of the AC a couple of years back, a staggered system of fee increases has been implemented raising fees over 3 years (this year being the last year).

Regarding those highlighted line items, the credit card machine counts for 24% of the school's budget. Thus, the AC will be tasked with finding alternative options for payment this year that can be implemented next year. Last year's survey that was given to credit card using families will need to be rolled out again to the new families. As for alternate options, unfortunately, according to the District, using Infinite Campus is not an option.

The nutrition costs for CHECLC's 0-3 program are approximately \$105,00. The District invoices Sarah for this amount – the District acts as the vendor. The District has not positively received looking for alternate vendors, but it would be extremely helpful if we could find a way to reduce these costs. Lauren asked whether, with new District leadership, we

could not push back harder regarding asking the District to cover this nutritional cost? Traditionally, this idea has not been met positively either.

Andy added comments based on his presentation to the Board last year that the District did not seem inclined to further subsidize CHECLC and that there is an emphasis on the need for the school to generate funds.

Lauren added that if there is going to be a talk between Sarah, the Head of Finance and the new Superintendent, Dr. Whitaker, she would be more than happy to assist Sarah with talking points to strengthen our arguments.

#### **6. Proposed AC Work (Sarah)**

Sarah asked that the AC focus on the credit card issue and finding alternatives.

#### **7. Standing Date and Time (Sarah)**

It has been decided that the AC will meet virtually every other month on the second Wednesday of that month at 5PM.

#### **Action Items:**

- 1. AC members need to come to the next meeting with ideas for alternatives to the credit card machine option for fee and/or after school payment.**
- 2. AC members interested in the role of Chair or District Rep should email Sarah.**
- 3. Garrett will share with AC members the credit card usage survey that was devised by the AC last year.**

#### **Remaining Meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every other month @ 5PM; virtual)**

- November 8, 2023
- January 10, 2024
- March 13, 2024
- May 8, 2024 (last meeting of the year; typically more social than meeting!)

#### **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:02PM.

**Minutes submitted by Samantha McMahan**

# APPENDIX 1

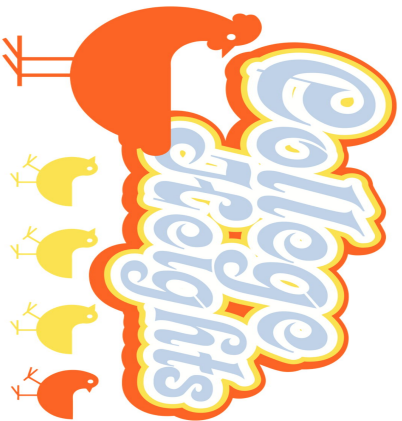
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# Advisory Council Welcome

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# Introductions

Please introduce yourself and...

- Let us know your child and his/her teacher at College Heights
- What interested you about joining the council

# What is the role of the advisory council?

Advisory Chair: TBD

Advisory Secretary: Samantha McMahan

District Council Member: TBD

Duties:

- Offer advice on school Operations and Program quality
- Advance the goals of our program within the community
- Serve as the liaison between school and the Central Office at City Schools of Decatur.

# Advisory Council Norms

- We will strive for consensus
- We will summarize what has been accomplished.
- We will remain open to new ideas.
- We will start and end our meetings on time.
- We will actively listen and participate.
- We will constructively support, challenge, and counter one another resulting in creative problem solving.
- We will respect one another
- We will be fair and mindful of speaking space

# Council Highlights

- Parent Norms
- Frasier Center after care policy
- Interview Team
- School Board presentation
- Budget and Tuition Structure
- Marketing Policy
- Scholarship spots
- Parent Engagement



# School Improvement Plan

## Three pillars

- 1) Racial Equity- Social Justice
- 2) Accelerating Student Learning- Early Literacy Skills
- 3) Positive Climate and Culture- Early Intervention Education

# Potential Council Work 2023-2024

Alternative to credit card machine

Supporting school's DEI work

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# APPENDIX 2



At College Heights, parents are a vital stakeholder. The responsibility for children's educational development is a collaboration among parents, staff, and community members. Parent involvement helps extend teaching outside the classroom, creates a more positive experience for children and helps children perform better when they are in school.

Norms are agreed-upon definitions of productive behaviors and mindsets that should be usual, or “the norm,” whenever a group is working together. Together, the staff, student and parent norms will allow our school community to support and foster the College Heights mission: *College Heights Early Childhood Learning Center cultivates an atmosphere where children take their first steps in building an authentic love of learning through developmentally appropriate practices in an environment that fosters family and community involvement.*

### COLLEGE HEIGHTS PARENT NORMS

1. **Parents/guardians prioritize getting their children to school on time.** The school is invested in providing a quality experience for every child, and that starts with having them present so they can fully benefit from the intentional day planned for them. Parents make every effort to support this goal and communicate with their teacher(s) when they encounter any challenges.
2. **Parents/guardians collaborate with their classroom teachers to set individual goals for their child(ren).** The school is committed to preparing every child for kindergarten success! Setting goals as a parent-teacher team and engaging in opportunities throughout the year to discuss progress is a critical part of that aim.
3. **Parents/guardians appreciate staying “in the know.”** The school prioritizes communications and is mindful of limiting emails and newsletters to content essential to ensuring a great experience for every child. Additionally, parents work with their teacher(s) to determine the best form of communication for classroom-related updates, questions, or concerns (i.e., communication folders, newsletters, daily sheets, emails, etc.).
4. **Parents/guardians feel comfortable and encouraged to provide feedback.** Striving to be a “best in class” learning center, the school follows a continuous quality improvement model that relies on receiving feedback. Parents serve as an essential source for both positive feedback and opportunities for reflection and growth. Whether through formal surveys, parent-teacher conferences, or simply an email to one of the school’s administrators, parental input is key in supporting the school’s progress.
5. **Parents/guardians support a “safe sharing” space.** When circumstances call for greater discretion, parents know they can reach out directly to the school’s principal, program director, or the College Heights Parent Advisory Council Chairperson and feel assured their feedback will be handled with finesse and sensitivity.

# APPENDIX 3



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**Advancing Racial Equity:** Using the Do 4 for Self Framework, staff will work toward increasing awareness of their racial ID, developing cultural humility, and overcoming personal biases and deficit perspectives regarding students.

By May 2024...

**Goal:** By May 2024 \_\_\_ % of lead teachers will have assessed their equitable classroom practices in the Do 4 quadrants “students” at “some evidence of E.C.P” or higher on 50% of their responses as measured by the *Equitable Classroom Practices Observation Checklist*.

Baseline Data:		Mid-Year Data	End of the Year Data:	
___ % of lead teachers assessed their equitable classroom practices in the Do 4 quadrant” students”, at “some evidence of E.C.P” or higher on 50% of their responses as measured by the <a href="#">Equitable Classroom Practices Observation Checklist</a>				
EOY goal:				
Action Plan Steps	Owner	Principal's Monitoring Plan	Due Date	Budget
To establish baseline all leads will complete a self assessment on equitable classroom practices using the Equitable Classroom Practices Observation Checklist.	Principal Leads	Monthly equity team meetings	Aug 30, 2023	n/a
Review of completed self assessments to identify areas of understanding and growth to drive equity work/PL	Equity Team Leads	Review will happen during staff and equity meeting	September, 2023	n/a
Identify recommended staff PL and timeline to create multi-year plan	Admin, equity team	Completed PL plan	October 2023	
Continued professional development for all staff on issues of educational equity: (using anchor text and Do 4 framework)	Equity team	Monthly staff meetings	ongoing	n/a



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Monthly webinar/book study sessions on “Don’t Look Away- Embracing Anti-Bias Classrooms”	Principal	Registration of school based equity team members for monthly webinar	ongoing	n/a
Monthly school based equity meetings	Sarah	Scheduled calendar of meetings, agenda to be created during monthly admin meeting	ongoing	n/a

Accelerating Student Learning				
Increase student achievement in early literacy skills. As early literacy skills are foundational for student success in the elementary years, we must provide effective and explicit literacy instruction in the preschool years. There is a direct correlation between strong early literacy skills and third grade reading proficiency.				
<b>Goal:</b> By May 2024 85% of prek and preschool students who score a performance level of below average on the fall Get Ready to Read-R screener, will score at or above average on the spring Get Ready to Read-R screener.				
Baseline Data:	Mid-Year Data		End of the Year Data:	
_____% (#) of prek and preschool students scored a performance level of below average on the fall Get Ready to Read-R screener				
Action Plan Steps	Owner	Principal's Monitoring Plan	Due Date	Budget
Complete Get Ready to Read screener on all children ages 3-5 *GRTR	teachers	Screener administered 3x per year Equity for Instruction Team Data Examinations Fall, Winter, Spring	Monday, August 28 Friday, January 19 Friday, May 10	n/a
Prek Get Ready to Read Intervention Based on data, students scoring below average will receive 1 early literacy small group per week. Small group will target early literacy skills.	Instructional Coach, teachers	GRTR screening results GRTR Weekly Formative Data	Ongoing	n/a
Research, identify and implement evidence-based early literacy interventions using an MTSS based model of implementation	MTSS teacher, ILT, Instructional Coach	Admin meeting agenda	ongoing	n/a



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Parent workshop on acquisition of early literacy skills	Instructional coach, mentor teacher	Literacy week event	October	n/a
Improve instructional strategies in the area of early literacy to include Phonological Awareness, Print Awareness, and Oral Language skills	Instructional Coach, mentor teacher	Team planning agendas	ongoing	n/a
Creation of a Portfolio system to monitor progress in the 0-3 classrooms to formalize documentation through work samples, anecdotal notes, photographs, etc for GELDS and HighScope KDI's Literacy domains.	Instructional Coach, 0-3 teachers	Weekly team planning agendas	ongoing	n/a
To address early literacy (print awareness) all preschool and prek classrooms will be implementing the HighScope Message Board (preschool), Daily Morning Message (prek).	Instructional Coach, teachers	Lesson Plan Evidence	ongoing	
To address PA Skills All preschool and prek classroom will Implement phonological awareness pacing guide and Large Group Literacy Pacing guides.	Instructional Coach, Prek teachers, Preschool Teachers	Pacing Guides Lesson Plan Evidence	completed	n/a
To address PA Skills Implement Hegerty Prek Phonological Awareness Curriculum in all Prek classrooms	Instructional Coach,	Pacing Guides Lesson Plan Evidence	completed	n/a





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**Building a Positive Culture and Climate**

College Heights will cultivate a climate and culture of inclusion, respect and collaboration with families and community members which will allow us to create an experience that reflects our values of belonging, acceptance and respect.

**By May 2024...**By May 2024, 60% of our parent population will have participated in two or more [parent engagement opportunities](#).

Baseline Data:	Mid-Year Data		End of the Year Data:	
0% of College Heights parents have participated in two or more parent engagement opportunities.				
Action Plan Steps	Owner	Principal's Monitoring Plan	Due Date	Budget
Parent orientation to include Parent Norms and importance of parent engagement	Principal	Pre Planning virtual orientations	July 2023	
Parent Engagement "menu" communicated to parents via Parent Engagement Year at a Glance	Admin/leads	Pre Planning, Meet and Greet	July 2023	
Parent resource area established in Media Center (to include Equity mobile book cart)	Media Clerk	Monthly admin meetings with media clerk	ongoing	
Parent Engagement opportunities communicated on a weekly basis so that parents have ample time to plan	Principal	Weekly school newsletters and website	ongoing	
Admin will collaborate with local community resources to provide educational workshops as an opportunity for meaningful engagement with all families representing the ECLC community	Admin	Admin monthly meetings	ongoing	



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# APPENDIX 4

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