

Wayland Public Schools

FY17 System-Wide Goal ACE Progress Report: Nurturing Early Childhood Development

System-Wide Goal: To nurture early childhood development by fostering community structures and support services to meet the growing social, emotional, and educational needs of the children and families in Wayland.

A Accomplishments	C Challenges	E Exemplar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of the Wayland Family Resource Guide came out of the work of last year’s Early Childhood Exploratory Committee. Work continued this year to disseminate this guide to as many families as possible. To this end, the guide is now available digitally on the Town of Wayland website, as well as The Children’s Way website. A goal is to have the guide updated each year and accessible via all community preschools’ websites. • A survey was created and sent to all Early Childhood Directors in Wayland to gauge concerns, awareness of available resources, and need for additional guidance consultation and professional development support. • A survey was created and sent to all parents of preschoolers at The Children’s Way and all community preschools to gauge parents’ needs and concerns, and to gather information regarding awareness of available resources, as well as the best vehicles and formats for connecting parents to those resources. Information from this survey will be utilized to enhance existing resources and craft additional supports. • A “Parent Conversations” series was initiated by Dr. Dossie Kahn to provide a forum for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the busy lives of parents of young children, particularly working parents, challenges remain regarding gathering a substantial body of feedback around their concerns and needs. Additionally, it can be difficult to tailor the delivery of services and supports in ways that are optimally accessible for parents. Major barriers include demanding work schedules, the need for child care, and limited resources in Wayland. Enhancing and sustaining accessible support services will be a major goal of the Early Childhood Advisory Board. • Limited models of early childhood guidance support in public schools and at the community level. • Limited staffing at Wayland Youth and Family Services inhibits expanding their reach to support more families of young children. Challenges cluster around what is feasible and scalable in order to be impactful and address needs. • Limited collaboration with Wayland Children & Parents Association (WCPA), which could play a major role in disseminating information to parents and broadening of parent education offerings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The newly-established Wayland Early Childhood Advisory Board met four times over the course of the 2016-2017 school year. This group provides a framework for collaboration among disparate providers working with young children and their families. Co-chairs are Katy Merrell and Gretchen Lutz, and members include teachers and parents from The Children’s Way, the WSCP Director, an elementary principal, community preschool directors, Wayland Youth and Family Services clinicians, Wayland’s Community Partnerships for Children & Families Coordinator, and a Wayland children’s librarian. • In response to a growing need for support around early childhood mental health concerns, a section of the school budget was proposed and passed which includes increased guidance hours at all three elementary schools. An innovative and forward-thinking initiative tied to these increased hours creates a role for elementary guidance counselors to begin to provide, as needed, consultation and/or professional development to address the needs of students 3-5 years old. • To increase parents’ awareness of and connection to available resources in Wayland

<p>parents of young children to share their concerns, get support, receive expert advice, and be connected to additional resources, as needed. This “drop-in” group meets at the library, and sessions have been held monthly since October of 2016.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determining staffing and resources to maintain an accurate and up-to-date Family Resource Guide that can be readily accessed through various websites.• A challenge to be addressed next year would be to look at creating time for some consistent collaboration between kindergarten and area preschool teachers. Due to varying schedules this could potentially be very difficult to achieve.	<p>and surrounding communities, “face-to-face” exposure is a priority. To this end, Dr. Dossie Kahn was invited to The Children’s Way Back to School Night this past September, to do a brief presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on feedback from the educator survey, it was determined that a Director’s Forum would be beneficial to share the work of the Early Childhood Advisory Board with community preschool directors. A well-attended meeting was held at Loker on April 12, 2017, and from this meeting there emerged a strong interest in forming a permanent Preschool Director’s Group starting next fall.
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