

Early Learning Board Meeting 8/19/25

Attendance: Nikki Sliger, Kenzie Jennings, Brian Hall, Shea Tibbett, Karen Wiggins, Virginia Huycke, Hollie Kessler, Pastor Kurt Freeman, Joey Woodyard, Karen Van Horn, Jessica Gillespie, Dana Blanchard

I. Prayer

- a. Pastor Kurt opened the meeting with prayer.

II. Welcome, Introductions, & Minute Approval

- a. Committee introductions were made
- b. May 2025 meeting minutes were approved as submitted with no corrections.

III. EL Chair Report

- a. Brian reports that summer camp went well and we are now getting ready for half-day to begin.

IV. Directors' Report

- a. Shared about a situation with a child who is having severe behavior issues and has a difficult family situation. Spark advisor has come to observe, and child is beginning therapy soon. Child was suspended from class this week, planning a meeting with family this week to discuss situation. Directors believe this child needs one-on-one care that we can't provide; Kurt has reached out to the family and talked with them. Kurt believes that teachers/directors have gone above and beyond to try and help, but we may not be the facility for this child and supports directors in what they decide is best.
- b. Update on class enrollments:
 - i. Lambs-full
 - ii. Colts-1 opening
 - iii. Farm Hands-4 openings
 - iv. 4-day Pre-K-full
 - v. 5-day Pre-K-11 openings
 - vi. Young 3's-3 openings
 - vii. 3-4 A-5 openings
 - viii. 3-5 B-6 openings
 - ix. MTO Wed-full
 - x. MTO M/F-2 and 3 openings
- c. Half-Day starts next week
- d. Fall Festival at Wea Creek Orchard 9/25-will have silent auction baskets again and are getting ready to start collecting for those
- e. MTO teachers request that trash be taken out of the nursery on Sundays to be ready for class on Monday.
- f. Have had multiple fire drills this summer (some pulled by kids 😊); Discovered that we need strobes in 2 rooms which will be around \$1700 and Koorsen will install these

V. Treasurer's Report

- a. Dana shared that we need to change the way we calculate payroll to make sure we are compliant. Dana, Hollie and Nikki will work together to make sure this is done correctly.

- b. Also want to avoid overtime as much as possible; will add a 5-minute grace period to clocking in and out; anything outside of the 5-minute window will need to be approved by a director.
- c. Will begin work on budget for next year. What needs are there?
 - i. Chapel Curriculum (Kurt offered to help with this)
 - ii. Playground Surface
 - iii. SC will only be 10 weeks next year instead of 11 due to new TSC school calendar; should parents still have the option to opt out of 3 weeks of camp? Or should that change to 2? Discussed the idea of having one week of “fall camp” the week in Oct. when TSC is off for fall break. Directors will poll parents and see if there is interest in this.
 - iv. Continue with planned \$15 increase in tuition fees

VI. Preschool & Childcare Teacher Representatives Report

- a. Shae reported that a full-day teacher who has now earned her bachelor’s degree believes she is entitled to the \$2/hour raise that is given for this; directors shared that she was hired at a rate higher than what we currently hire at (by previous directors). Committee discussed and determined that these situations will need to be handled on a case-by-case basis considering the rate they were hired at and what raises they have received along the way. Kurt and Dana can work with directors to help figure this out. A “cap” on pay rates also needs to be determined.
- b. Virginia reported that some half-day teachers have concerns about the cleaning requests for classrooms.

VII. Preschool & Childcare Parent Representatives Report

- a. Joey reported that the previous concerns about curriculum in the Farm Hands room has been addressed and great progress has been made. He has heard very positive feedback from other parents that previously had concerns. He has shared with the teacher that it has been a great experience so far and parents are pleased.
- b. We need a new half-day parent rep and we are working on that.

VIII. Old Business

- a. Had a fundraiser night at Freddy’s a couple of weeks ago

IX. New Business

- a. Karen asked if we should review our emergency communication procedure. There was a situation this summer during summer camp where there was bad weather/tornado warning while kids were on the bus returning from a field trip. Parents were texting Kenzie individually which made it difficult for her to manage the situation and communicate effectively to all parents in a timely manner. Committee discussed and decided that all communication should come through Brightwheel in those situations and directors should have some “pre-made” templates to send so they can get communication out quickly.
- b. Hollie and Kurt reported that our payroll subscription is changing, and we will now be charged a per-employee fee each month. The cost for this will be around \$120 per month for EL (the church will still be paying the \$1800 lump sum subscription). They also report our IT service contract will be changing and there will be an increase of \$150 per month for EL. In addition,

some new computers/hardware are needed as some are outdated and won't support needed upgrades and the one-time cost for that is \$2500.

- c. Kurt shared that we do need to continue to have a plan in place to increase costs to cover expenses as grants are fewer. He proposed a video to share with families (relatives, grandparents) asking if they would like to donate to EL to help keep costs down (encourage the \$2000 tax-deductible gifts to qualified charities) He also shared that he is having a conversation with Grace UMC about the possibility of a working with their child care ministry on a joint 501c3 so that we could get grants that religious organizations aren't eligible for.
- d. Other Fundraising Ideas: Annual Gala, working Purdue concessions, benefit nights, T-shirt Sales, Payless/Amazon account partner programs, advertise silent auction items ahead of time for Fall Festival
- e. Discussed adding a parent booster group/PTO to help with fundraising ideas

X. Next meeting 10/28 at 6:15 pm