

Hoboken Early Childhood Advisory Council (HECAC) Mission

The Hoboken Early Childhood Advisory Council (HECAC) serves the Hoboken school district as an external advisory body whose mission is to support high quality preschool program implementation and transition efforts as children move from preschool through grade 3 via collaboration with the district, key stakeholders, and the broader community.

This mission is currently realized in part through the efforts of four standing committees: the Needs Assessment/ Program Evaluation Committee, the Transition Committee, the Community Engagement Committee and the Council Affairs Committee. These committees have been formed to work on initiatives brought before the Advisory Council during a meeting or via the results of needs assessment/program evaluation, as well as to address concerns that may arise. More specific information about these four committees including committee purpose, goals, and composition is listed below. Updated 10/7/15

Needs Assessment/Program Evaluation Committee

Purposes of Committee

- To work closely with provider representatives to generate survey items (needs assessment, volunteer solicitation, program evaluation)
- To generate a schedule and format for survey administration and coordinate with providers
- To support survey data collection and entry by the providers, as needed
- To compile and analyze results and interpret themes and significant findings
- To share survey results to Council, Board of Education, and parents

Goals for 2015-2016

- With full participation of HECAC, implement new surveys and distribution process (content, frequency, electronic delivery) to increase response rates and obtain insightful feedback that can drive actions.
- Develop surveys for parents of kindergarten grade children and seek to implement either this or next year.
- Distribute, collect, analyze, and provide feedback on three surveys based on content derived from our existing 2014-2015 surveys.

Composition of Committee:

- Cristina Dulay (Lead)
- Susan Despins
- Diana Milne
- David Tornabene
- Molly Vollman Makris

Transition Committee

Purposes of Committee

- To provide transition guidance and support for pre-K through kindergarten families, by using existing resources or by identifying and creating new resources
- To identify resources that can help ease the transition to and from Kindergarten and suggest adaptations congruent with local needs/composition/community dynamics
- To support the expectations of the Director to implement transition efforts and outreach

Goals for 2015-2016

- Review transition-related deliverables developed in previous years to determine changes/additions
- Determine a timeline, with a list of deliverables, of additional transition-related information to be provided through the Council for parents/caregivers (focus on the transition from home to pre-K3, pre-K3 to pre-K4, from pre-K4 to Kindergarten, and from Kindergarten to 1st grade)
- Produce transitional information take-aways—such as letters to be sent home, handouts provided at events such as the Open House, or flyers to be distributed through the classrooms—to be provided to parents/caregivers throughout the year
- Work with the Needs Assessment/Program Evaluation Committee to survey parents of current students (3 year olds, 4 year olds, and kindergarteners) for their perspectives on the transition process and identify best practices to continue and opportunities for improvement

Composition of Committee:

- Dorothy Landi (Co-Lead)
- Janet Cortes (Co-Lead)
- Jessica Mahony
- Nory Rojas
- Monica Stromwall

Community Engagement Committee

Purposes of Committee

- To elevate the Hoboken Public Schools Early Childhood Program's profile within the community
- To actively engage the community at large about the Hoboken Public Schools Early Childhood Program's accomplishments
- To create and leverage innovative outreach tools in an effort to communicate with parents and the greater Hoboken community

Goals for 2015-2016

- To explore and research various options for hosting an independent HECAC website
- To launch a HECAC social media presence via Facebook, Twitter, and an email-based newsletter (for example, Mail Chimp)
- To create new communications tools targeting families with children with special needs regarding available services for them
- To promote the new communications tools for families with children with special needs by building partnerships with local organizations and through social media
- To promote the new Kindergarten video by building partnerships with local organizations and through social media
- To meet with Principal Fitzhugh at Connors Elementary School and write an editorial for a local paper about the recent progress at the school
- To research and explore ways to encourage income-eligible families to apply to the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program

Composition of Committee:

- Vera Sirota (Lead)
- Peter Kim
- Sheillah Dallara

Council Affairs Committee

Purposes of Committee

- To ensure that each member of HECAC has a clearly defined and executable role that culminates in meaningful and sustained contributions to HECAC
- To coordinate the nomination process and assist with the review of applications to help fill vacancies quickly and efficiently
- To ensure that all materials are accessible and current on district website and HECAC website
- To coordinate amendments to bylaws and solicit Council discussion/vote
- To identify ways to support fundraising efforts for pre-K3 and pre-K4

Goals for 2015-2016

- Create materials about HECAC for dissemination to Board of Education and parent community
- Develop a recruitment and selection protocol for filling vacancies efficiently
- Create formal roles for volunteer committee members and potential partners to support various HECAC committees
- Explore online registration process
- Update the Organizational Chart, Biographies, Representative Interest Forms, and Conflict of Interest Policy
- Review bylaws for accuracy

Composition of Committee:

- David Celiberti (Lead)
- Nelys Moyeno
- Melissa Pasquariello
- Anthony Oland