

Little Blessings Preschool Minutes

Monday August 25 6:30 p.m.

Good Shepherd Room Madison Campus

Attending: Emily Thomson (Chair), Heidi Anderson (LBPS – Madison), Rick Blum, Linda Hayes (LBPS – Verona)

Not attending: Paul Bekx, Shannon Davis, No Board Rep.

Quick recap

The meeting covered updates on childcare program enrollment, financial status, and operational changes, including discussions about classroom capacity and staffing transitions.

Welcome, Short Devotion and Prayer

Emily had the devotion about why children see God differently than adults.

Madison Campus Update (Heidi)

Heidi reported that we are at 28 student days (student day=student per day) for the fall. We had a tour, which could increase the number to 33. LBPS - Madison needs 40 student days to make a profit. Had 35 to start the fall. Fall 2023 we were at 24.

We averaged 45 student days this summer, so we made a profit. Monday and Friday, we had 8 students a day, while Tu-Thu. we had 14-16. Not all students were all-day students.

We are not doing after school in FY 26. We had 2 kids sign up per day, but we needed 4/day to make it go. We did get some interest from Facebook. Heidi would be open to trying again.

Heidi is investigating the idea of starting parenting class for 4-6 weeks in partnership with the UW Extension Office. She may engage Holy Cow to participate and use a Thrivent grant to pay for it. We could add a class about teaching children about faith at the end.

I would like to build a better relationship with the social worker at Orchard Ridge.

Heidi does believe word of mouth about the program is improving. One of the kids is coming because they know someone else here.

Verona Campus Update (Linda)

Linda discussed classroom capacity, noting that the Ravens class is full at 16 students and the Whales class is at 13, with plans to add one more student in January due to the older age profile of the current class. Linda also shared that she has transitioned to reduced hours, working between 25-30 hours per week, and will remain available in the afternoons to support classroom operations. *Linda said it's just going to be a lot different for her, and she feels a lot less stressed this year.*

Getting new LVP in the classrooms this week.

Hannah (new teacher) is having fun decorating. Verona is having an open house Thursday.

Financial Update (Rick)

Rick presented the financial status of the childcare program, noting they almost broke even last year with \$288,000 in revenue and \$291,000 in expenses. In FY 26, he is projecting \$314,000 in revenue with \$301,000 in expenses. Revenue is expected to increase, in part, because of increased tuition projections of \$27,000.

Rick also noted that state grant revenue for the program is returning, which is unexpected and not in the budget. He expects the school to receive appx. \$14,000 in additional revenue in FY26, including \$655/month for enrichment and \$510/month for teacher salaries.

Committee Goals Discussion (All)

The committee discussed their future direction.

Linda – I'm having a hard time thinking about anything but the first week of school.

Helping us advertise the program.

Heidi says it's worth considering whether to focus on preschool and 4K or consider whether to expand to serve older children. "We can take kids up to 11 right now. Do we want to stay that way?" Now that we have some of the financial stuff straightened out, now we can take a look at the long-range vision.

Emily – where's the need of the neighborhood?

Heidi – Since last year, we've become more of a daycare from a preschool. All kids but one are staying all day at least two days a week. We're getting teachers' kids. We have a teacher from Head Start who is considering placing their child. Could 4-C's or WESSN help? YoungStar?

Rick – he suggested that to determine that, the committee needs more data points to determine community needs. Also, does the church have input? Heidi suggested talking with Pastors might not be a bad idea

Linda – we could consider going back to a preschool model with extended days in Madison.

Emily – Where to parents go to look for childcare? 4-Cs? Social Worker?

Committee Recruitment and Meeting Schedule

The group discussed recruiting new members for their committee, aiming to add parents from each program and potentially one or two more members from the church. It was suggested that Rick talk with Emily Gold about recruiting parents inside the church. They agreed to hold quarterly meetings on the fourth Monday of each month at 6:30 PM, with the option to meet

remotely if needed. However, the May meeting would be moved up a week because of Memorial Day.

Summer Programming next year

Heidi said next summer, they will skip the week-long break between summer and fall programs in Madison, choosing to start the new school year immediately after summer ends. Lastly, they discussed distributing flyers about a program called "Little Blessings" to parents, with Linda agreeing to send them out in the spring.

Meeting ended at 7:23 p.m.

Next steps

- Heidi: Continue monitoring enrollment for the fall semester, currently at 28 student days.
- Heidi: Consider accommodating returning older/school-age children for next summer program.
- Heidi: Follow up with UW Extension Office about potential parenting classes.
- Heidi: Contact Rick Thomas about Holy Cow providing dinner for parenting classes.
- Heidi: Explore using Thrivent funds to offset costs for parenting classes.
- Heidi: Build relationship with school social worker in mid-September for recruitment.
- Linda: Confirm with Jennifer Skibba at VASD about filling the open 4K spot after the family moved to Japan.