

Little Blessings Preschool Committee

Monday March 9th, 2025, 7 pm – (Zoom and Madison campus)

Attending: Paul Bekx, Heidi Anderson, Emily Thomson, Karen Smith, Rick Blum,

Online: Linda Hayes, Beth Marshall, Hannah Falley

Quick recap

The meeting covered various topics related to Little Blessings Preschool, including enrollment updates, staffing changes, and potential growth opportunities. Participants discussed the success of recent events, current enrollment numbers, and plans for upcoming tours and programs. The group also addressed administrative matters, such as the need for more committee members and the consideration of accreditation options.

Welcome/devotion/announcement – 5 min (Paul/all)

Paul mentions he didn't prepare a devotion for the meeting, and after a brief, unsuccessful attempt to generate interest in creating one using AI, they decide to move on with the agenda.

Madison Director Update – 10 min (Heidi)

Heidi discussed the success of their 25th anniversary event and the progress of their summer program, which is now past its break-even point and halfway to its target of being full. Heidi also mentioned that their fall enrollment is lower than last year but still early, with another tour scheduled for the following week. Heidi noted an increase in tours and mentioned that they are receiving inquiries from parents whose children are transitioning from Christ Memorial Fitchburg closing preschool. The director is retiring, although another 4-k site is going in there. Verona got 5 kids from their school.

Heidi noted that Summer is already 41 class days for '25. Last year we were at 35.

This spring we're at 38.5. Last year we were at 26.5.

Verona Director update – 10 min (Linda)

Linda plans to step back from teaching and focus solely on the director's duties, reducing her hours. Kelly Madden, who currently teaches the Wales class, will move to Linda's class, and her assistant teacher, Kelly Berceau, will join her. They will hire a new lead teacher for the Wales class. The 4K class will remain unchanged. Rick mentioned that they are considering internal candidates for the new position and may advertise externally if needed.

Emily asked how does the process work about filling the position? Rick explains that we had advertised internally, and that Linda and he worked together to do the interview last Friday.

Paul asked what the financial implications of this restructuring were. Rick said he hoped the reduction in Linda's hours would nearly cover the cost of adding a new teacher.

Paul asked how we reach out to the parents of Christ Memorial? Linda mentioned that the Christ Memorial program is like Little Blessings in Verona and that a church member, Marie

DeStadler, has been spreading the word about the preschool. Rick suggested reaching out to Marie to further discuss the potential for growth and the transition to a 4K program.

Picture day was last Friday and went well.

The license is renewed for the next two years.

Youngstar is coming to Madison for training next week. Similar in style to Pyramid model being done in Verona. Paul asked about the accreditation process, and Linda explained that it was voluntary and that they didn't start until Devora came in as director.

Classes for next fall in Verona are already completely full, and she created an extra slot in each class.

Paul suggested that the committee could use more members and encouraged anyone interested to reach out. Beth is looking to step down, and Paul is looking to step down as well.

The meeting ended just after 7:30.

Next steps

- *Linda to email Marie DeStadler about informing other parents from Christ Memorial preschool about openings at Little Blessings.*
- *Rick to follow up with the HR Committee about the hiring process for the new lead teacher position at Little Blessings.*
- *Rick to potentially post a job listing on Indeed for the new lead teacher position, depending on HR Committee's decision.*
- *Committee members to consider stepping into co-chair roles as Beth and Rick are looking to step down.*
- *Committee members to consider recommending potential new members to join the committee.*