

Memorandum

DATE: April 28, 2011
TO: Faculty Senate
FROM : Jenessa Steele and Erin Webster-Garrett, Co-Chairs
RE: Radford University Child Care Task Force

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The following document summarizes the activities and recommendations of the Faculty Senate appointed Child Care Task Force

Introduction: History of the Issue

RU Laboratory School (1928-2006)

Due to budget cuts in 2006, Radford University closed the Early Learning Lab and the Human Development program. The Early learning Lab supported only preschool children but at one time the Lab School included k-12. Radford had one of the longest standing lab schools, spanning over 78 years.

Staff Senate Initiative: Faculty-Staff-Student Child Care Survey 2008-2009

The Childcare Survey sent to all faculty, staff and students in the 2008-2009 academic year found not only overwhelming support for childcare at Radford University, but a very real and persistent plea for Radford University to provide childcare. Survey results included over 10 pages of written comments supporting childcare at Radford University, however a brief outline of the results is provided below:

- Of 297 respondents (47% students, 51% employees), 291 stated approval of on campus child care at Radford University
- 152 respondents stated they would be interested in fall/spring full-time childcare for an infant (N = 67) or preschooler (N = 30)
- In response to the question: "If Radford University initiated a childcare program/facility, how likely would you be to change your current childcare to the RU childcare program (assuming comparable cost)? 107 stated Very Likely and 63 stated Likely
- 54 respondents indicated an anticipated need for childcare of an infant and 89 for preschooler over the next three years (thus, continued need established)

Faculty Senate Motion to Appoint a Child Care Task Force (April 29, 2010)

"The Campus Environment Committee hereby recommends that the Faculty Senate directs a representative Child care Task Force be formed to examine the current barriers to establishing child care at Radford University and possible solutions to said barriers. Issues to address should include but are not limited to the following: location/space, staffing, cost, target population, services to be offered, age groups to serve, days/hours of operation, and insurance/liability issues. The Campus Environment Committee recommends that the Child care Task Force include representative members from Faculty Senate, staff, TR faculty, AP

faculty, Graduate/ Undergraduate students, and an administrator, with all representatives selected by their peers. The Campus Environment Committee recommends that the Child care Task Force deliver to Faculty Senate by April 1, 2011 two to three possible models for providing child care at Radford University with associated pros, cons, and costs.“

Faculty Senate Appointments to the Child Care Task Force, October 2010:

Co-chairs: Dr. Jenessa Steele (Psychology), Dr. Erin Webster-Garrett (English/FSEC)

Members: Dr. Pat Shoemaker (CoED), Dr. danah bella (CVPA), Dr. Basel Saleh (COBE), Deneen Evans (AP Senate), Sandra Beland (Staff Senate), Keri Foltz (GSC)

CCTF convenes November 18, 2010. Adopts the following as immediate objectives:

- Research potential spaces and funding: establish a space sub-committee.
- Explore partnering with a laboratory school.
- Liaise with private providers and Radford City School System.
- Research UVA’s implementation of KLC Childcare.
- Initiate meeting with President Kyle to discuss our charge.
- Contact facilities management to explore possibilities of having a center in the new fitness facility or other on-campus space. Meeting scheduled for April 20, 2011 with Roy Saville.
- Explore adapting another survey in spring semester.

Co-chairs meet with President Kyle on 19 January 2011. Issues identified by President Kyle:

- Insurance liability
- Location of on-campus space:
 - Concerned about appropriate pick-up and drop-off accessible sites on campus.
 - Very supportive of pursuing grants to reestablish a laboratory school. This would allow us to use the RU Foundation as a grant-finding resource as well as using on-campus space as an academic space.
 - Suggested meeting with Roy Saville to discuss on-campus spaces (please see the end of this report for a summation of the with Mr. Saville on April 20, 2011)
 - Other potential spaces:
 - Space behind Hunter’s Ridge
 - 10 acres behind Burlington warehouse
 - Contacting local property managers for local houses. Funding
- Specific issues to be addressed by CCTF:
 - Can a childcare center be built into the university budget? The President communicated she would speak with the Attorney General’s office to sort out the budget issues.
 - Consult with the RU Foundation about fundraising process but cautioned we could not use the Foundation to procure funding.
 - Pursue grant funding, especially regarding the establishment of a laboratory school. She was surprised to hear that at one time we had the oldest lab school in Virginia.

- Directed that we liaise with other higher-education institutions and specifically research how the childcare initiatives are funded and maintained.
- Identify provider of childcare and afterschool care services to other higher-education institutions in Virginia.
- Advised the following, regardless of childcare provider: Provider must:
 - take care of liability
 - be clear on cost of childcare to the community and establish a price point
- President Kyle offered to discuss childcare with City officials at an upcoming meeting.

Revised Action Plan

After meeting with President Kyle, the CCTF discussed first focusing on state-approved providers of care (which cover liability) and to focus on on-campus care (the idea being: “let’s do something we are proud of and let’s do it right”)

Ongoing Outreach to Radford City:

- CCTF spoke to Assistant Superintendent of Radford City schools regarding current childcare providers/services:

Email dated 1/1/2011 from Rob Graham:

“The Radford City School Division has placed an emphasis on daycare opportunities within the last five years, especially since our demographics continue to change. When I arrived at McHarg Elementary in 2006 we had a free and reduced lunch percentage of about 25% and there did not seem to be a need for after school care. Since then, our free and reduced lunch percentages have increased to about 40% this year and we now have many after school opportunities for our students. I am not sure that I would consider the following opportunities child care, but more on the lines of after school enrichment.

“At the elementary levels, we partner with Beans and Rice (on campus), The Wesley Foundation (off campus) and are in the process of discussing opportunities with local churches in the Radford area. We offer Beans and Rice at both MES and BHES and have between 80-100 students who attend. The Wesley Foundation is just for MES and we have between 13-15 students who participate. We also hold remediation after the winter break for students who need extra help preparing for these assessments. We usually have a large group of students attend these sessions (MES and BHES pending funding). Our biggest challenges with these programs are transportation, consistent attendance, funding and supervision. We do provide transportation for all programs except Wesley, but we have a limited amount of buses and drivers to use. The supervision can be problematic since the economy and school budgets have been so challenging lately and we have very little extra money to hire. We are not sure why attendance is so inconsistent, but think it may have something to do with family schedules, routines or lack of family schedules and routines.

“We also work closely with other after school programs like The Rock Club, Radford Childcare, Wonderful Wednesdays, Busy Bees Day Care and the Recreations Department.

“The high school does not have as many opportunities. Basically, children are involved in after school activities/athletics, clubs or they head down to the public library. If they are not doing this, they are usually not connected to anything and we have begun discussions with the RHS administration on how we can help these students become more involved in something after school. We do know that if they are involved in an after school sponsored program, they are less likely to become involved in drugs, alcohol, etc.”

Preliminary Research Findings Presented to BOV, February 2011:

“Radford University has a critical need for infant care and after school care. This need is projected to only increase as we anticipate upwards of 30 new faculty hires over the next 3 years and ever-expanding graduate programs. Options locally are limited with wait lists for toddler care and only one facility offering newborn care. Over 90% of childcare providers locally are Christian faith based, and none are accredited by the national accrediting body for early education (NAEYC). RU stands apart as one of the only higher education institutions in Virginia with a College of Education but no laboratory school.

CCTF identified a select list of Virginia institutions with childcare and/or laboratory facilities, including:

- College of William and Mary
- University of Virginia
- Virginia Tech University
- New River Community College
- James Madison University

CCTF identified three (3) potential models for childcare services:

- Contracting with a private provider (e.g. Children’s’ Creative Learning Center (a national organization, currently the deliverer of child care for UVA) or a local private provider such as Donna Thornton-Roberts)
- Establishing a Non-Profit Co-Op School (e.g. parent and volunteer run)
- Re-establishing an RU laboratory school”

In March 2011, the CCTF sub-committee met separately with representatives from Bright Horizons and Children’s Creative Learning Centers, two state-approved providers of higher-education childcare services with centers at UVA, JMU, Virginia Tech. CCTF set up presentations for early May with Bright Horizons and Children’s Creative Learning Center to present to interested faculty.

As a result of these meetings, the CCTF identified specific needs and points of service—See Appendix A

On April 20, 2011 Jenessa Steele met with Roy Saville to discuss potential on-campus spaces:

- Whitt Hall: The Whitt Hall remodel is number 2 or 3 in line and the refurbished space will include faculty offices for faculty who are currently off-campus.
- Burlington Property: There are no plans for the Burlington property in the 6-year Master Plan. However, there are preliminary plans for that space in the 10-year Master

Plan to be submitted at a later date. The CCTF recommends lobbying President Kyle and arguing that the best use for the Burlington property is a childcare facility.

CCTF Recommendations

Re-establish the Taskforce with two-year appointments to ensure continuity. One member should be a grant specialist, preferably from the College of Education, and another should have specific knowledge and familiarity with procurement and subsidy issues.

Recommended Charges for the ongoing Taskforce:

- Establish a working group of interested parties from the following constituencies
 - RU faculty and staff
 - RU student service communities such as Greek Life
 - Radford City schools and families
- Work with the Administration to establish a fundraising/capital project.
- Research grant opportunities for re-establishment of a laboratory school.
- Lobby to have the Burlington property designated as a space for a future childcare facility.
- Pursue contract negotiations in concert with RU Administration with either Bright Horizons or CCLC.
 - Work closely with chosen service provider in all steps pursuant to opening a childcare facility.
 - Make a commitment to creating a childcare space with modular buildings or retrofitting existing campus structures
 - Continue to update faculty and administration of progress
 - Continue research on childcare facilities and services at sister state schools