**Executive Director Report – November 20, 2019**

**Financial:**

* Revenue is a little short by $272. This is the time of year that we do see some enrollment changes, but have had a few inquiries as well so we are hoping everything will even out. November will be our first month with all the full-day preschool spots filled so this will help the bottom line.
* Expenses are a little over budget by $885. The payroll switch has happened and all staff are now doing direct deposit so we will see some savings in that line item. We did receive 4 free admissions to the Ct Afterschool Fall conference (this is a savings of $480), two were from our QSA pilot with the network and the other two were from our partnership with C3. This will be reflected in the November financials. The conference was Nov 2nd.

**Grants and Fundraising:**

* I attended the two-day grant writing workshop on Oct 28th and 29th. It was very beneficial and inspiring. They will be holding the second part in March and I will definitely be attending.

After attending these workshops I started thinking of different avenues for raising funds and partnering with the community. A new coffee shop has opened in town called 2 Wheels Coffee. It is located in the Noel’s Plaza. I reached out to the owner Rex McRee to see if he would be interested in partnering with CASTLE. My initial thought was to have some type of a beverage that a % of the proceeds could go to CASTLE and promote their business in our advertising etc. We met on Thursday Nov 14th and Rex was really on board with the idea. Rather than a drink it would be a pound of coffee. They do something similar at their South Glastonbury store for the school rowing team. This is a great opportunity for us and I’m really looking forward to this.

* I was informed that we did not receive the Elizabeth Carse Foundation grant. This was for Conscious Discipline training for all the staff and funds for the National Afterschool Conference.
* I have been researching other grant options. It is a challenging process to find grants that CASTLE qualifies for. I am continuously looking. There are a couple I am looking at that are due in April that we qualify for.

**Events Committee:**

The Winter Wonderland Event will be upon us soon. We have secured a Santa and possibly Mrs. Claus. At this time we are looking for donations of decorations. We have secured some raffle prizes from local business.

I looked into a fundraising opportunity from Funding Factory. This is where you collect used ink and toner cartridges and turn them into cash. I thought Copies Plus would be a great partner for something like this. They were willing to participate, but there is a specific list of cartridges that the company collects and theirs were not on the list. This is a fundraiser that we could still consider doing with another place of business and within our CASTLE families.

We have reached out to Foxwoods about the Bingo fundraiser and are hoping to have one in March/April. We have yet to hear back about a date yet.

**Marketing/Community Relationships:**

* Janet Swider-Wirth is a realtor in town. She recently had a business brief in the CBA newsletter about Parkbench. Parkbench is a platform for small business owners as well as other services in the community to reach out to them and build relationships in their community. Janet is the sponsor and ambassador for Parkbench and is offering it to Colchester businesses for free. I reached out to her and had an interview with her on November 5th for Parkbench. CASTLE is now part of the platform and the interview can be found on the Parkbench Colchester site. Along with our profile on the site we are also able to post different events as well.
* The Board Meetings and Winter Wonderland Event have all been posted on the Town Calendar.

**Misc.:**

* Kim and I attended an introductory training on ALICE. ALICE is the research-based, proactive approach, to respond to an active shooter. While this was just an introduction course and not the official training I found it very helpful and see ways that we can improve upon our current crisis management policies.
* I attended the 2019 Regional Meeting Series: Funding for Nonprofits: If Not Now, When? On November 13th. This meeting was very informative on what is going on in the state in reference to nonprofits and ways to advocate for funding for nonprofits. It was made clear that the Governor is not looking to put any funds towards the nonprofit sector, but encouraging nonprofits to steer towards private donors.