

Bristol Early Childhood Collaborative
Regular Meeting
February 4, 2026

The regular meeting of the Early Childhood Collaborative (BECC), formerly School Readiness Council was held on February 4, 2026 on the Zoom Meeting Platform, and called to order by Co-Chair Maegan Adams and Sandra Godin at 12:03 PM.

A **recording of this meeting** is at: https://bristolct.gov.zoom.us/rec/share/xPLOqulpZtkjYh7sy4oZImGs1VBauXgUd9l3-4sKR3-8gy7m5UWtxiVg9UwKI.KSIcHw_-3hsVsvjW
Passcode: v!jnCG3^

Present: Maegan Adams, Stephanie Daniele, Michelle Fangiullo, Yesenia Fuentes, Cecilia Garay, Sandra Godin, Cristina Gutierrez, Michelle Herens, Peter Kelley, Donna Koser, Susan Adeife Lee, Amber Lipscomb, Melissa Mendez, Valerie Pelletier, Kaitlyn Rondeau, Whitney Shufelt, Kara Singleton, Claire Strillacci, Courtney Sugarman

Absent: Liz McGuire, Brenda Moore

Also Present: Zach Maher, Donna Osuch, Jennifer St. John

- **Welcome and Introductions:** It was agreed that meetings going forward will run from 12:00-1:15
- **Approval of Bristol Early Childhood Collaborative Meeting Minutes held January 7, 2026:**
 - *Motion by BECC member Stephanie Daniele and seconded by Kaitlyn Rondeau, it was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the regular Bristol Early Childhood Collaborative Minutes held January 7, 2026.*
- **Committee Updates:**
 - Program Quality – Michelle Fangiullo
 - Programs discussed staffing and enrollment – openings at Bristol Child Development Center and Imagine Nation
 - Bristol programs who applied for additional Early Start CT (ESCT) slots learned they did not receive them
 - Programs shared concerns about OEC Parent Portal and their requirement to use for admissions
 - OEC sent action plan survey to programs that are underutilized by 90% or less
 - United Way of CT trying to match families from Care4Kids wait list with open ESCT spaces, but backfiring for families already in state-funded spaces
 - Michelle shared success of Weekend Food Backpack Program at Imagine Nation
 - Next meeting is February 11 at 1:30 at Imagine Nation and on Zoom
 - Health and Wellness Committee – Maegan Adams and Stephanie Daniele
 - Bristol Child Development Center is hosting Lunch and Learn Zoom educational sessions, and they want to expand and invite the community; the one on screen-free environment and eye health was successful
 - UConn Cooperative Extension offering free seeds again this year

- Committee recapped the successful clothing drive/swap and hopes to hold a back-to-school clothing drive
 - Community Baby Shower discussion resulted in BECC and BBHD each hosting one
 - Next meeting is February 10 at 2:00 at City Hall Room 1-3 and on Zoom
- Governance – TBD – no report
- Community Outreach – Jennifer St. John
 - 4th Annual Family Fun Day is June 27 at BAIMS from 11:00-2:00 with rain date 6/28
 - Next meeting is February 9 at 2:30; email Maegan or Jennifer if you want to join the committee
 - Special Education Hub hosting event for families on IEPs and 504s February 24 at 6:00 at the Library, in partnership with BPS
 - Next Special Education Hub meeting is March 2 at 4:00 on Zoom
 - Recruiting for the Parent Council; flyer emailed after meeting
 - Next meeting is April 16, 2026 at 4:00 on Zoom
- Transition to Kindergarten – Courtney Sugarman
 - Committee agreed to the Dine & Discuss topic, building conversational skills for young children (and how to share with families)
 - Discussed winter activities, including transition meetings and early notification
 - Discussed impact of kindergarten age change so far
 - We have 524 families enrolled in Ready4K
 - Next meeting is February 9 at 3:45 on Zoom
- **Strategic Framework:**
 - Logo Update: shared color options from Pixel & Code, and everyone agreed on final logo
 - Update Strategic Framework, all priorities, to google doc and will review in March: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1snXNdk1zaJa-p46N63mccYCdZv4obSP0UAQjuEjs6HA/edit?tab=t.0>
- **Bristol Early Childhood Collaborative Liaison Report – Donna Osuch**
 - Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and Shine Early Learning Updates
 - OEC awarded approx. 1,000 new state-funded spaces, nobody in Bristol received funding
 - Quality Enhancement funding will be for 18 months, and we'll receive the application in March/April
 - Programs have not been paid their increase of 8% yet
 - OEC developing a Parent Portal, where all state-funded spaces will be available
 - Programs that were 90% or less underutilized were sent a survey to share strategies
 - \$10 million for program stabilization grants, but have not heard what that means
 - OEC received approx. \$12 million Federal Preschool Development Grant for systems
 - Met Monday with Allison Cusano, Shine CT Program Director, OEC Ombudsman Michelle Cook, and Asst. Comptroller Robin Manuele – asked who's not at table
 - Shine hosting Communities of Practice for liaisons/staff and for Parent Ambassadors
 - Local Needs Assessment will be shared end of February

- Donna and Jennifer attended the CT Early Childhood Alliance's Advocacy Academy last week at the Legislative Office Building
 - Legislative Session opens today at noon with Governor's budget proposal; expecting:
 - Need advocacy to keep Early Childhood Endowment funded
 - Insurance companies look at 211 reports and deny coverage for minor (and fixed) violations
 - Need additional funding to help move families off Care4Kids wait list
 - OEC budget hearing is February 17
 - Kindergarten waiver not likely to be removed
- Local Updates
 - Weekend Food Backpack Program had 35 families 2 weeks ago and 37 this week with support of Gloria Dei Church and Grace Baptist Church
 - Hosting an event for family child care providers with Hartford March 5
- Parent Ambassador Updates
 - Snack and Chat events to connect parents with each other at the library at 3:30 –
 - March 1 screen time and vision with Dr. Bartles
 - March 8 vision boarding
 - March 15 fairy tale and read-aloud dress up
 - Hiring a 4th Parent Ambassador
- **Resignations:** none
- **Appointments:**
 - Zachary Maher, Bristol Public Schools
- **Old Business:** none
- **New Business:** none
- **Community Sharing:**
 - Jennifer asked people to share the BECC flyers on social media and Facebook events for the Parent Council and Special Education Advocacy Night
 - Sandra shared that the Governor's budget cut the Family Resource Centers rather than give them an increase as promised; FRCs have been flat-funded since 1994, and Bristol had a site cut in 2018; she has a document to collect signatures
 - February 7 is Take Your Child to the Library Day, and first 40 to attend receive a stuffed llama
 - United Way of Central and Northeastern CT is joining Read Across America Day, and Donna K shared a flyer
- **Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 1:10 PM

Next regular meeting: March 4, 2026 on Zoom

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Osuch
School Readiness Liaison