

Bristol School Readiness Council
Regular Meeting
March 6, 2024

- The regular meeting of the School Readiness Council was held on March 6, 2024 on the Zoom Meeting Platform and called to order by Chairperson Romann at 12:18 PM.

Present: Matt Baronowski, Cecilia Garay, Maureen Eaton, Michelle Fangiullo, Yesenia Fuentes, Michelle Herens, Sarah Holmes, Andrew Howe, Donna Koser, Susan Adeife Lee, Amber Lipscomb, Alyssa McGhee, Wendy McGrath, Brenda Moore, Valerie Pelletier, Jillian Romann, Dina Schaffrick, Courtney Sugarman, Kristina Tanguay, Valerie Toner

Absent: Siri Gilmore, Jennifer St. John

Also Present: Maegan Adams, Yolande Lazarus-Guerrero, Rachael Witkewicz

- **Welcome and Introductions**
- **Approval of School Readiness Council Meeting Minutes held February 7, 2024:**
 - ***Motion by School Readiness Council member Andrew Howe and seconded by Maureen Eaton, it was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the School Readiness Council Minutes held February 7, 2024.***
- **Committee Updates**
 - Program Quality – Maureen Eaton
 - Discussed staff and enrollment updates
 - Discussed BristolWORKS!, and Wendy met with CDA students from first cohort
 - Discussed Office of Early Childhood (OEC) updates
 - Discussed the grant extension for one year
 - Waiting for OEC report so can pay Enrollment based grant - UPDATE providers were paid February 28th
 - New initiative for programs with health or safety violations - Consultation Quality Improvement Supports Program
 - Bristol Services Open House on March 20th from 2:00-6:00 at Adult Ed
 - Kindergarten Registration opened February 1st
 - Financial reports due from programs for first half of year
 - Legislative session started February 7th, and Donna will share updates as she gets them
 - Donna shared the Governor's budget related to early childhood
 - Liaisons met with Commissioner Bye February 13th about OEC priorities
 - 385 families registered for Ready4K text platform as of February 8th
 - Next meeting is March 14 at 9:30 at Edgewood Pre-K Academy and on Zoom
 - Health Committee – Kristina Tanguay
 - Discussed behavioral health and how to get Wheeler Clinic at early childhood Open Houses, conferences and Family Nights to describe programming to families
 - Planned educational Zoom classes:
 - April 17 gardening and healthy eating with Leo
 - May 15 mental health awareness with child therapist
 - September 18 eye health with Sherry and Dr. Bartles

- November TBD, but perhaps how to keep children healthy
 - Discussed a community dental health clinic (Mission of Mercy) for a future year
 - Discussed ongoing projects:
 - Wellness Wednesday has health posts on Making Bristol Better FB page
 - Seed Project will have seeds donated by Ocean State Job Lot through the UConn Extension Program
 - Little Read book is Maisy Goes to the Eye Doctor by Lucy Cousins
 - Committee started a thank you card for the Senior Knitters
 - Next meeting is March 12 at 2:00 on Zoom
- Governance – Sarah Holmes
 - No report
- Community Outreach – Donna Koser
 - Next Family Fun Day is June 29 with a rain date June 30, 2024; looking for vendors, and the Facebook Event Page is: https://www.facebook.com/events/747562250742605/?acontext=%7B%22event_action_history%22%3A%7B%22extra_data%22%3A%22%22%2C%22mechanism%22%3A%22unknown%22%2C%22surface%22%3A%22home%22%7D%2C%7B%22extra_data%22%3A%22%22%2C%22mechanism%22%3A%22left_rail%22%2C%22surface%22%3A%22bookmark%22%7D%2C%7B%22extra_data%22%3A%22%22%2C%22mechanism%22%3A%22calendar_tab_event%22%2C%22surface%22%3A%22bookmark_calendar%22%7D%22ref_notif_type%22%3Anull%7D
 - Parent Ambassadors want to organize a class to help parents navigate special education, and holding a planning meeting on March 21 at 1:00 on Zoom - let Donna know if you want to participate
 - Next Family Fun Day meeting is March 18 at 12:00
 - Next Outreach meeting is April 18 at 10:00
- Infant and Toddler – Michelle Herens
 - There was a guest speaker at the February 20th meeting - Pam Mulready, Program Manager SEPI-CT/Wheeler Clinic/CT Clearinghouse - who presented information on supporting families who are using substances. Hospitals are required to report parents using legal and illegal substances, as the State is gathering information about birthing parents and Family Care Plans.
 - Next meeting is March 19 at 1:30 on Zoom
- Transition to Kindergarten – Courtney Sugarman
 - Wheeler Clinic update is they're unable to service Pre-K community sites
 - 196 children were registered for Kindergarten as of March 1st
 - There have been approximately 50 waivers submitted requesting early Kindergarten entrance as of February 12
 - Discussed upcoming activities:
 - Transition meetings between EPKA and elementary schools concerning the special education students have been held and are being scheduled
 - Register for Kindergarten media blitz has begun and will continue
 - Second Dine & Discuss will be held April 30, and a small committee met to finalize the details

- Next meeting is March 18 at 3:45 on Zoom
- **School Readiness Liaison Report – Donna Osuch**
 - Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and other Updates
 - We have not been given the grant extension guidelines yet, though we were told we should hear soon. We will have to scramble with tight deadlines to get everything done locally.
 - Liaisons met with OEC Commissioner February 13th and again with Child Day Care providers February 29th about the proposed legislation Early Start CT (summary of Governor’s Bill 5051 and SB 152 attached).
 - Most of proposed changes will go into effect July 1, 2025, assuming they’re passed, but OEC is committed to paying programs directly and quarterly at some point in the next fiscal year
 - Reimbursement rates for full-day/full-year pre-K spaces will go from \$8,924 to \$10,500 on July 1, 2024
 - School Readiness Councils will be renamed Local Governance Partners
 - SB 152 is focused on changes to the Care4Kids subsidy program
 - Donna participated in NAEYC’s virtual Public Policy Forum February 25-26, and attended virtual meeting with Sen. Blumenthal’s education staff, and hoping to attend meeting with Larson’s office.
 - Local Updates
 - New portal for the City’s meeting agendas and minutes went live February 1, 2024. Please let Donna know if you have any problems accessing or using the site.
 - Kindergarten registration started February 1st, so please tell families to register as soon as possible. Even if they’re waiting for their well-child visit, they should upload everything else now. Children registered by the last day of school will be entered into a raffle to be taken to their first day of Kindergarten on a fire truck.
 - BECA, SR and the Parent Ambassadors hosted a Kindergarten prep event at the Bristol Public Library March 3. Thank you to Jillian and Kindergarten teacher Barbara Tedesco for presenting.
 - Donna presented to the Board of Finance February 26th.
 - New Little Free Library at St. Vincent DePaul Mission, and the ribbon cutting on February 9th was covered by *The Bristol Press* and *The Bristol Edition* (online) - <https://www.bristoledition.org/blog/2024/02/11/little-free-library-opens-at-st-vincent-depaul/> .
 - Bristol Adult Ed is hosting a Community Services Open House on March 20th from 2:00-6:00, and School Readiness will have a table (flyer attached).
- **Quality Enhancement Report:**
 - The library is running numerous animal, puppet and magic events as well as sp[ecial story time programs with Quality Enhancement funding
 - Family Resource Center’s Preschool Development classes are March 12th and 26th; Road to Literacy in April and May with a free book to all community preschool children; and FRC supporting Kith and Kin and licensed Family Child Care providers with Quality Enhancement funds
- **Monitoring Visits Report**

- In February,
 - Edgewood Pre-Kindergarten Academy (EPKA) had 149/149 part day/part year spaces filled with wait list
 - Bristol Child Development Center (BCDC) had 117/129 full day/full year spaces filled and 52/56 CDC infant/toddler spaces filled
 - Imagine Nation, A Museum Early Learning Center (INMELC) had 119/119 full day/full year Pre-K spaces and 8/8 infant/toddler spaces filled
- **Resignations:** none
- **Appointments:** none
- **Old Business:** none
- **New Business:** none
- **Community Sharing:**
 - Tina shared that the CDC revised their recommendations regarding all respiratory illnesses: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncird/whats-new/updated-respiratory-virus-guidance.html>
 - Andrew shared that Parks, Rec, Youth and Community Services have a lot going on:
 - Misfit Mammies hosting huge egg hunt April 6 from 2:00-6:00 at Rockwell Park with 100,000 eggs
 - Nominate Youth of the Year at myrec.com, and winners announced May 8 at 6:00 PM
 - Family Camper Sleepover September 14th at 6:00 PM with limited number of tents available
 - Donna Koser shared that United Way is running the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program through tax season: https://www.uwestcentralct.org/free-tax-preparation-service?fbclid=IwAR3gnnlgfpKX_XzlGTUqfClM-WF8pfopFCTOeqq6s4LE1aix3OenzqRvZmk
- **Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 1:01 PM.**

Next regular meeting date: April 3, 2024 on Zoom

Respectfully Submitted,
 Donna Osuch
 School Readiness Liaison