

**Bristol Early Childhood Collaborative
Regular Meeting
September 3, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Early Childhood Collaborative (BECC), formerly School Readiness Council was held on September 3, 2025 in Room 1 at the Bristol Public Library and on the Zoom Meeting Platform, and called to order by Liaison Donna Osuch at 12:07 PM.

Present: Maegan Adams, Stephanie Daniele, Cecilia Garay, Sandra Godin, Michelle Herens, Kate Kerchaert, Susan Adeife Lee, Amber Lipscomb, Liz McGuire, Valerie Pelletier, Erick Rosengren, Dina Schaffrick, Kara Singleton, Jennifer St. John, Iris White

Absent: Yesenia Fuentes, Alyssa McGhee, Brenda Moore, Kaitlyn Rondeau, Courtney Sugarman

Also Present: Dagmary Balanta, Michelle Fangiullo, Chantal Gauvin, Donna Koser, Melissa Mendez, Aubrey Minkler, Claire Strillacci

- **Appointments: Motion by BECC member Maegan Adams and seconded by Amber Lipscomb, it was a unanimous vote to approve the following appointments to serve on the Bristol Early Childhood Collaborative.**
 - Stephanie Daniele, Parent
 - Michelle Fangiullo, Imagine Nation
 - Sandra Godin, Bristol Family Resource Centers
 - Kate Kerchaert, Main Street Community Foundation
 - Melissa Mendez, Wheeler Health ECCP
 - Kaitlyn Rondeau, WIC
 - Kara Singleton, Wheeler Health
 - Claire Strillacci, Bristol Public Library
- **Welcome and Introductions**
 - Second Co-Chair – we will vote to add a second co-chair in October and welcome everyone who is interested to reach out to Donna or Sandra to learn more
 - Orientation Presentation (attached) – Donna shared an orientation that included many changes from School Readiness to Early Start CT. She will hold another orientation for new members and anyone interested that will help members better understand our work. The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) also shared a fact sheet describing the endowment that will fund the new system, and Donna will attach with the minutes.
- **Approval of School Readiness Council Meeting Minutes held June 4, 2025:**
 - ***Motion by BECC member Jennifer St. John and seconded by Amber Lipscomb, it was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the regular School Readiness Council Minutes held June 4, 2025.*** Note that this was our final meeting as the School Readiness Council.
- **Transition:**
 - Vision and Mission Statements – Fio Partners proposed the following from the retreat:
 - Draft Mission: To connect and empower families, educators, and community partners to ensure that all children in our community – from birth through age eight – have access to the resources, relationships, and opportunities they need to thrive.

- Draft Vision, Version A: A Connected community where every child and family is supported, valued, and prepared for lifelong success in school and life.
 - Draft Vision, Version B: A caring and connected community that works together, so every child and family feels included, gets the support they need early on, and is ready to learn, grow and succeed in school and in life.
 - We will work in small groups at the October meeting to finalize.
- Website and Social Media update – Donna Koser shared slides with QR codes to our social media pages and how to find our web page. The original website is still active, but it redirects people to the City of Bristol’s page (slides attached that also include draft vision and mission statements)
- New Logo update – Sandra shared that we expect to see a few new logo options by next week. We’re working with WORX and are pleased with their work so far.
- **Committee Updates**
 - Program Quality – Michelle Fangiullo
 - Discussed staffing and enrollment updates
 - Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and Statewide Updates:
 - OEC created a monitoring tool they expect all liaisons to use, which Donna shared. She presented briefly to staff at community PD days.
 - Early Start General Policies are in process of being updated
 - ECE Reporter – programs are having trouble uploading large batches
 - There are two new roles at OEC: Director of Operations Sam Reinstein, and Ombudsman Michelle Cook (michelle.cook@ct.gov and 860-996-0229)
 - Care4Kids developing a new policy manual and has a public portal for feedback: <https://www.ctoec.org/care-4-kids-feedback-form/>
 - Next meeting is September 10 at 10:00 at Bristol Child Development Center and on Zoom
 - Health and Wellness Committee – Maegan Adams and Stephanie Daniele
 - August meeting was combined Health and Infant Toddler committees – discussed and shared each committee’s goals, priorities and activities. Agreed that goals for both are outdated, should be reviewed annually and could be braided together.
 - Collecting data for next meeting
 - Health and Infant Toddler committees will combine and be called Health & Wellness
 - Next meeting is September 9 at 2:00 at City Hall Room 1-3 and on Zoom
 - Governance – TBD
 - No report
 - Community Outreach – Jennifer St. John
 - Stephanie connected with a mom who offered to do a braiding event for back-to-school
 - Members asked to think about how to evaluate effectiveness of our efforts – data driven with a focus on outcomes
 - Logo is being redesigned by WORX, and social media pages and website updated
 - Next meeting is October 16 at 10:00 on Zoom

- Transition to Kindergarten – Donna Osuch
 - Discussion about transition to kindergarten activities for May and June, including the Parent Orientation (need to clarify goals) and survey in May and the Fire Truck raffle
 - Kindergarten registration opened February 1, and 316 children registered by 6/1
 - Winners of the Fire Truck ride to their first day of Kindergarten were Gianna Palma going to Greene-Hills and Eyad Merghani going to Hubbell
 - Next meeting is September 15 at 3:45 on Zoom
- **Bristol Early Childhood Collaborative Liaison Report – Donna Osuch**
 - Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and Shine Early Learning Updates
 - Bristol received its contract from Shine Early Learning but waiting to sign until Corp Counsel gives okay. We submitted our startup plan 9/2, and the budget is due by 9/30.
 - Local Updates
 - Donna creating a “newsletter” to inform our local and state delegation, and will also share with BECC members
 - We have a draft Strategic Framework from Fio Partners from the June retreat. We will look at it next month when we finalize vision and mission statements (attached).
 - The membership and meeting survey many completed over the summer showed a strong preference to continue meeting the first Wednesday at noon, with in-person meetings in September, October, May and June and Zoom the rest of winter/spring. There will always be a virtual option.
 - Later in the fall we will complete a demographic survey to see if our membership represents Bristol’s families
 - Donna will hold another orientation for new members, and anyone interested is welcome
 - Donna is working with HR to hire a new position, Family and Community Outreach Coordinator, and three (3) Parent Ambassadors
 - Once the Parent Ambassadors (PA) are hired, we plan to start a Parent Council with representation from every Bristol early childhood program and elementary school (Kindergarten or first grade parent), run by the PA’s
- **Resignations:**
 - Donna Koser, United Way of West Central CT
 - Alyssa McGhee, Wheeler Health ECCP
 - Wendy McGrath, Tunxis Community College
 - Jillian Romann, Bristol Public Schools
 - Sarah Roy, Bristol Family Resource Centers
 - Val Toner, Bristol Public Library
- **Old Business:** none
- **New Business:** none
- **Community Sharing:**

- Main Street Community Foundation has two grant cycles open for gender-based programs. The Women & Girls Fund is open through 9/26, and the Men & Boys Fund is open until 9/19. Call Kate to discuss your program before applying.
- The Rapid Response parent survey for parents with children age 6 and younger is open and attached. You can print the flyer or email to families, but the flyer is not allowed to be posted on social media.
- United Way of Central and Northeastern CT is recruiting volunteers for their Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program.
- The Office of Early Childhood (OEC) has a parent and caregiver survey (attached), created by UConn School of Social Work, for parents with children age 5 and younger. Parents who complete the survey will receive a \$30 gift card.
- Family Resource Centers Play & Learn Groups will start the last week of September. They also have a group for family child care providers – please share with providers.
- Bristol Public Library is moving up their fall programming to the week of 9/15. The schedule is on their website, and flyers are available upstairs or online. September is Library Card Sign Up Month, and the library has new cards available – everyone should get their new card.
- **Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 1:09 PM.**

Next regular meeting date: October 1, 2025 at Bristol Public Library and on Zoom

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Osuch
School Readiness Liaison