

**Valley Early Childhood Regional Council Meeting**

**February 10, 2022**

**Zoom 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

***To support the Valley Community as a leader in early childhood development and family engagement in an effort to ensure all Valley children are prepared socially and developmentally to thrive in school***

In attendance:

Council Co-Chair - Carissa Caserta, Naugatuck Valley Health District

Council Co-Chair - Mary Sue Feige, Principal, Bungay School Seymour

Diana Brancato, Ansonia School Readiness Coordinator

Ayanna Williams, Derby, Seymour, Shelton School Readiness Liaison

Darla Lussier, Principal, Mohegan School Shelton

Mario Ciccarini, Principal, Bradley School Derby

Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal Bungay School Seymour

Dr. Resse Morales, Director of Equity & Communications Ansonia Public Schools

Sheila O’Malley, Economic Development Director Ansonia

Dee Kopec, Mayor’s Office, Shelton

Jamie Peterson, Lead Director Early Childhood, TEAM Inc.

Tracy Platt, Ansonia School Readiness-Ansonia Public Schools

Alyson Stanisci, Ansonia School Readiness/Shelton School Readiness-TEAM, Inc.

Barbara Eckner, Ansonia School Readiness/Derby School Readiness-YMCA

Kristen Santilli, Director of Curriculum/Shelton School Readiness-Shelton

Liz Heon, Seymour School Readiness/Derby School Readiness-Kid’s Club

Shannon Bullard, Ansonia School Readiness-Julia Day

Cathy Pomeroy, Bradley School Derby

Dorca Rodriguez, Family Engagement Coordinator Ansonia

Keely Edwards, Irving School Derby

Debra Hansen, Valley Regional Adult Education

Lynn Rider, Child First, Parent Child Resource Center/BHcare

Linda Jordan, Child First Parent Child Resource Center/BHcare

Jen Shuart, Ansonia Public Library

Cathi Kellett, Safe Kids-Griffin Hospital

BJ Hornby, Shelton

Alison Conway, Little Raiders Derby

Michele Holovach, Early Head Start, TEAM Inc.

**Welcome/Introductions – Carissa Caserta/Mary Sue Feige**

Mary Sue and Carissa called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

**December 9, 2021 Minutes**

Dee made a motion and Aly seconded to accept the minutes from the December 9, 2021 meeting. All were in favor with no opposition so the motion carried.

**Regional Budget** **– Carissa Caserta/Mary Sue Feige**

Carissa reported that after the Council voted to approve the payment of the $500 stipend to Joshua for the website work, the regional budget to date is $8,748.98.

**Naugatuck Valley Health Department – Carissa Caserta**

Carissa shared that COVID numbers have been moving in a downward pattern and now there is concentration on contact tracing and working with school nurses on the 18 and younger population. By 2/28, it will be up to each town, not NVHD, to determine the mask policy and if the vaccine clinics in those towns will continue operating. So far, six communities have decided not to continue the vaccine clinics. The NVHD is preparing for vaccines in children 5 years old and younger by having staff trained in injections for infants and partnering with local pediatricians.

**OEC/Liaison Updates - Diana Brancato/Ayanna Williams**

Both Diana and Ayanna reported to the Council updates on Memo #37, Memo #45, Memo #48 which included revisions and the links that are available for the Memos on the VECRC website: [www.vecrc.org](http://www.vecrc.org). Monthly Reports included reimbursements based on slots and 25% operational expenses through the end of the year.

Care 4 Kids payments were paid to programs by the OEC through 11/21. Parents resumed the payments in December 2021. The OEC has extended the due date for C4K reporting from 1/7/2022 to 1/28/2022. In January, the ECE Reporter added an administrator view for liaisons with training on the use of the tool to be provided in the future.

The FY23 School Readiness RFP details will be released shortly. The Qualified Workforce Incentives program is new to the OEC and hopes to recruit and retain a qualified early childhood workforce. Liaison Monitoring continued for a third round in Ansonia, Derby, Seymour and Shelton. The Provider Meeting is scheduled for 2/28. (See the attached School Readiness Liaison Report for February 2022 for more details).

**Program/Agency Sharing**

**School Readiness Providers**

Tracy - Ansonia Public Schools has 50 FD/FY Ansonia School Readiness slots with 49 currently utilized and 10 PD/PY with 10 currently utilized. Staff completed training “Storytelling for Enrichment, Early Literacy and Fun”; Incentive program for reading every day; and Griffin Hospital Safe Kids provided Sleeping Safety and Car Seat Safety.

Alyson – TEAM has 18 FD/FY Ansonia School Readiness slots with 17 currently utilized and 28 FD/DY Shelton School Readiness slots with 25 currently utilized. An online Family Engagement Tool through Teaching Strategies has been implemented for communication between parents and teachers; the Education Coordinator is coaching teachers on implementation of the Creative Curriculum; and the Health Coordinator is working with the new Nurse Consultant to set up a shared calendar for site visits.

Barbara – YMCA has 22 FD/FY Ansonia School Readiness slots with 22 currently utilized and 7 FD/FY Derby School Readiness slots with 6 currently utilized. Leah’s Lending Library was reactivated; Starbuck’s “food rescue” program has been shared with families; Training on 2/21 will include “Outdoor Steam” to enhance outdoor play.

Shannon – Julia Day has 23 FD/FY Ansonia School Readiness slots with 23 currently utilized. The program is using Brightwheel to track immunizations and physicals; Networking with the community was achieved through participation in Ansonia’s Harvest Festival; Reconnecting with parents on Care 4 Kids income guideline changes.

Liz – Kid’s Club has 13 FD/FY Seymour School Readiness slots with 13 currently utilized and 6 FD/FY Derby School Readiness slots with 0 currently utilized. The program has updated their policy for quarantining following the new regulations from the OEC; All family incomes have been updated in the files; Distributed family and staff evaluation forms and waiting for returns.

Darla – Shelton Public Schools has 10 PD/PY Shelton School Readiness slots with 10 currently utilized. Staff receiving support in the Fundations Program that focuses on letter recognition and sounds; Meetings are being scheduled for transitions to kindergarten highlighting individual goals and objectives.; and CES is providing coaching to preschool teachers including modeling, observation, classroom environment, sensory and instructional strategies.

(See attached VECRC Program Provider Council Reports for February 2022 from all School Readiness Providers above)

**Child First**

Lynn received the new Child First contract which is being negotiated. She is receiving the new reporting requirements and learning the new database. Staff is ready to go back into the homes although some families prefer to be at the clinic. The teams are using telehealth when necessary. Lynn is hoping to double the caseloads in April and May which fell off in 2021. (See attached Child First report for February 2022)

**Early Head Start Home Based**

Michele stated that recruitment is still a top priority for the Early Head Start program. There is still a vacancy for a Home Visitor that will be posted soon. (See attached Early Head Start Home Based report for February 2022).

**Valley Regional Adult Education**

Debra reported that the numbers are increasing in Adult Education. The program is in the process of ending new enrollments and starting to keep a list of potential students for the upcoming registration in August 2022. (See attached Valley Regional Adult Education report for February 2022).

**Ansonia Public Library**

Jen shared that in-person programming including Story Time, has started at the Ansonia Public Library. Julia Day will be visiting the library. Jen asked that everyone is encouraged to share the newsletter with families. This is the link to the newsletter for the Children’s Room: <https://conta.cc/3A89JuV>.

**Other**

Cathi Kellett announced the Annual Health and Safety Fair and Touch a Truck Event on Sunday, May 15, 2022 11:00-3:00 at Warsaw Park. Ansonia Schools is donating healthy food for 2000 people. Registration letters are going out this week for interactive booth set up. Email Cathi if you want a booth and/or a lawn sign. Children will receive potted plants and can plant their own vegetable garden “Getting Healthy with Food”.

**Next VECRC Meeting: April 28, 2022**

**9:00-11:00 via Zoom**