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**Valley Early Childhood Regional Council Meeting Agenda**

**October 13, 2022**

**9:00-11:00 am**

**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

***Mission: 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 Member Name** | **Email** | **Affiliation** |
| Carissa Caserta | ccaserta@nvhd.org | NVHD/Co-Chair |
| Mary Sue Feige | msuefeige@seymourschools.org | Seymour Schools/Co-Chair |
| Ayanna Williams | ayannawilliams127@yahoo.com | Derby/Seymour Shelton SR Liaison |
| Diana Brancato | dbrancato@ansonia.org | Ansonia SR Liaison |
| Dee Kopec | kopecs@att.net | Mayor Designee- Shelton |
| Alison Conway | aconway@derbyps.org | Superintendent Designee- Derby |
| Krissy Warranger | kwarranger@derbynecklibrary.org | Librarian- Derby |
| Courtney Sherman | csherman@bhcare.org | Healthcare Provider |
| Linda Flach | lflach@lnvpcrc.org | Healthcare Provider |
| Reese Morales | amorales@ansonia.org | McKinney-Vento Liaison- Ansonia |
| Barbara Eckner | beckner@cccymca.org | Provider- Ansonia and Derby SR |
| Shannon Bullard | sbullard@juliadaynursery.com | Provider- Ansonia SR |
| Alyson Stanisci | astanisci@teaminc.org | Provider- Ansonia and Shelton SR |
| Tracy Platt | tplatt@ansonia.org | Provider- Ansonia SR |
| Elizabeth Heon | kidsclub@sbcglobal.net | Provider- Derby and Seymour SR |
| Rebecca Verdicchio | rverdicchio@sheltonpublicschools.org | Provider- Shelton SR |
| Kristen Ezzo | kristenfinocchiaro@gmail.com | Parent |
| Keely Edwards | kedwards@derbyps.org | Derby Schools |
| Cathleen Kellett | ckellett@griffinhealth.org | Community Rep. |
| Debra Hansen | dhansen@vrae.org | Community Rep. |
| BJ Hornby | bjhornby@att.net | Community Rep. |
| Laura Harris | Laura.harriscc@gmail.com | Community Rep. |
| Catherine Pomeroy | cpomeroy@derbyps.org | Community Rep. |
| Lauren Reid | lreid@seymourschools.org | Community Rep. |

**Welcome and Introductions- Carissa Caserta**

Carissa called the meeting to order and introductions were made along with sharing a favorite part of fall or something fun that was done over the summer.

[**Minutes**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1H-nDpo4oLiT1QShwji0GjHQiPiPTxB18/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=104577981175663960685&rtpof=true&sd=true) **from May 26, 2022 Meeting**

Linda Flach made a motion and Keely Edwards seconded to accept the minutes from the May 26, 2022 meeting. Keely Edwards-second the minutes. All were in favor with no opposition so the motion carried.

**Program/Agency Sharing:**

**Valley Regional Adult Education (VRAE)-**

The VRAE Report was shared prior to the meeting. Debra highlighted that they have hired a full-time CT certified guidance counselor which will help in making more connections to the community. She shared that registration is closed until next semester and that they have 263 enrollments for the 2022-2023 year.

**School Readiness Providers-**

Tracy- *Ansonia Public Schools* has 50 Full Day/Full Year slots and 10 Part Day/Part Year slots and all 50 FD/FY and 10 PD/PY slots are utilized. Tracy shared on the following Quality Components:

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| --- | --- |
| ***Quality Components*** | ***Implementation*** |
| *Family Literacy* | *Local Author, Katie Melko, visited our program and one of her books was purchased for each child to take home and share with their family. Also, see below for field trips to the Ansonia Library.* |
| *Collaboration with other community programs & services* | *Field trips to the Ansonia Library are scheduled in January and February. All families will have the opportunity to sign up for library cards prior to the trip so that all students can check out books during the field trip.* |
| *Sliding Fee Scale* | *The new sliding fee scale was distributed to the program in September and we will be begin using it for the first time with one re-determination that is due to occur this month.* |

Tracy also noted that she is currently collaborating with Child First for a family enrolled in her program.

Shannon- *Julia Day Nursery* has 23 Full Day/Full Year slots and all 23 FD/FY slots are utilized. Shannon shared on the following Quality Components:

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| --- | --- |
| ***Quality Components*** | ***Implementation*** |
| *Health (record-keeping policies and referrals)* | *Began using Brightwheel to track immunizations and physicals to allow better tracking and parent notifications. Working with a new social services consultant to provided support for staff and families.* |
| *Family Literacy* | *Participated with Pitney Bowes and the United Way Reading Buddies program. Each family got a reading buddy and a book along with Family resources on literacy.* |
| *Sliding Fee Scale* | *Supported all families with the process of applying for Care 4 Kids during fall registration process.* |

Diana shared on behalf of Aly Stanisci- *Lower Naugatuck Valley EC Ed (TEAM)* has 18 ANSONIA Full Day/Full Year slots and all 18 FD/FY slots are utilized. SHELTON has 10 Full Day/Full Year slots and all 10 FD/FY slots are utilized. The following Quality Components were shared for Ansonia and Shelton School Readiness:

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| --- | --- |
| ***Quality Components*** | ***Implementation*** |
| *Health (record-keeping policies and referrals)* | *We are now maintaining digital student files. Staff are required to upload required student documents into ChildPlus.* |
| *Professional Development* | *We are utilizing 3 additional days throughout the school year to support professional development for teaching staff.* |
| *Sliding Fee Scale* | *4 TEAM key leaders attended the OEC Updated Fee Guidance & Fee Schedule Webinar. Our program is electing to utilize the fee schedule beginning October 1st . We will re-determine currently enrolled families as needed on a case by case basis and provide a 30-day written notice for those cases.* |

Barbara- *Valley YMCA Child Care Center* has 22 ANSONIA Full Day/Full Year slots and all 22 FD/FY slots are utilized. DERBY has 7 Full Day/Full Year slots and 6 slots are utilized. Barbara shared on the following Quality Components:

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| ***Quality Components*** | ***Implementation*** |
| *Health (record-keeping policies and referrals)* | *Flu shot reminder letters sent to families and also included COVID vaccine info to encourage families to immunize for COVID too. We will be keeping track of how many students get COVID vaccine for informational purposes only (not required).* |
| *Family Literacy* | *Brought back Scholastic Book Club and purchased books to give to families. Also sent home pumpkin name scrabbles to families.* |
| *Collaboration with other community programs & services* | *-Helped on many occasions APS, Julia Day, Diana B sharing materials/documents i.e. LEP’s, DOTS, NAEYC, etc.*  *-Meeting monthly with Stratford Y to share NAEYC portfolio & update*  *-Collaborated with NVHD to give families information regarding COVID vaccine.* |

Liz- *Kids Club* has 13 SEYMOUR Full Day/Full Year slots and 9 slots are utilized. DERBY 6 Full Day/Full Year slots and 1 slot is utilized. Liz shared on the following Quality Components:

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| ***Quality Components*** | ***Implementation*** |
| *Parent Involvement (Family Engagement)* | *This year we started inviting families back into the center. The month of October and November we asked families if they would like to come in and read a book. We have several families excited to come in. We also are ending the month of October with a fall festival for the families to attend.* |
| *Collaboration with other community programs & services* | *Even though October is fire safety month (we have too much already planned) we will be having the FD coming in November to talk about fire safety with the children.* |

Rebecca- *Shelton Public Schools* *Mohegan* has 22 Part Day/Part Year slots and 18 slots are utilized. Shelton Public Schools Long Hill has 23 Part Day/Part Year slots and 23 PD/PY slots are utilized. Rebecca shared on the following Quality Components:

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| ***Quality Components*** | ***Implementation*** |
| *Parent Involvement (Family Engagement)* | *New parents and children to our program were given an opportunity to attend both an orientation at the end of August and a “Back to school night” in September.* |
| *Health (record-keeping policies and referrals)* | *Our school nurse has gone through all children’s files to make sure their Physicals, immunization records, Physician's name and insurance information is up to date.* |
| *Nutrition* | *In my monthly newsletter I gave suggestions of healthy snacks that parents can send with their children daily.* |

**Child First-**

The Child First Report was shared prior to the meeting. Courtney introduced herself as the new Program Manager and shared that she worked for Child First as a clinician prior to replacing Lynn Rider. She highlighted that there are currently two teams and they are working on getting another clinician. They currently have 12 families and once they get another clinician, they will add more students. 15 families on the waitlist. There has been an increase in home visits and excited to provide support -serves Ansonia, Derby, Shelton, Seymour and Woodbridge

With a new clinician, they will receive extensive Child First training- DCF families will be a priority; continue to send the families to Child First of the Parent Child Resource Center of BHCare.

**Regional Budget Discussion- Carissa Caserta/Mary Sue Feige**

Carissa reported that the balance of the regional budget to date is $8748.98. TEAM holds the money for us.

**Naugatuck Valley Health Department- Carissa Caserta**

Carissa reported that cases have gone up a little this week but things are getting

back to normal. Flu clinic in Naugatuck went well. Carissa told Council members to let NVHD know if any preschool wants a flu clinic. NVHD continues to bel a resource to preschools and schools; provides guidance on contract tracing for schools

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

The Liaison Report was provided prior to the meeting. In summary, Ayanna and Diana shared the following:

-allocations have been uploaded into the eGMS system.

-OEC has revised two policies: fee schedule (last revised in 2019) and fee guidance-need to make fees more equitable for families-depending on family income; see report for more detail. -OEC notified another allocation for School Readiness with COLA funds-; specific guidelines on the use of COLA funds; providers will need to complete reports on funding expenditures.

-Ayanna and Diana will be visiting sites, monitoring, checking files for accuracy, accreditation status and training-each program will receive a summary report and action plan if needed-will share with governance committee.

-OEC School Readiness space form was shared.

**Other:**

Ayanna expressed the importance to have parents at the table. Flyers have been sent to programs/agencies and libraries encouraging parents to join. The Council welcomed a new parent- Welcome Kristen! Kristen asked, “How do parents know about the programs in our communities and how can we be sure they do?” Diana and Ayanna shared the different recruitment procedures in the 4 communities.

**Motion to Accept Local VECRC Policy GP B-02: Guidelines on Fees, Fee Schedule and Family/Per-Child Contributions-**

Diana reviewed the VECRC local policy to meet the requirements of GP B-02. The changes were provided in the document prior to the meeting and were highlighted in yellow. After the few revisions were discussed, Linda Flach made a motion to accept and Cathi Kellett seconded the motion. All were in favor with none opposed.

**Adjournment**

**Next VECRC Meeting: December 8, 2022 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

\*\*\*Please feel free to share the VECRC website link with Valley families \*\*\*

[www.vecrc.org](http://www.vecrc.org/)