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**NORTHEAST EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL**

**Monday, November 19, 2018**

**5:30-7:00 p.m.**

**Brooklyn Elementary School**

**In Attendance:** Myra Ambrogi, Noveline Beltram, Cara Blackington, Patty Bryant, Patricia Buell, Rena Cadro, Bob Chenail, Kristine Cicchetti, Ken DiPietro, Paula Graef, William Hull, Tracy Johnson, MaryEllen Jones, Tom Kohl, Christine Millette, Tammy Miner, Emily Morrison, Emily Ross, David Sizemore, Sally Sherman, Melanie Smith-Cervera, Barbara Teetrealt, Mark Weaver, Kim Wood

New Guests: Judith Smith, Kim Merchant, Erin Lavallee, Lisa Audette, Shannon Haney, Briana Patriarca, Stefanie DeFault

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Guest Speaker: Parent Educators – FRC’s
3. Approval of last meeting minutes
4. School Readiness Updates
5. Regional Director Update
6. Regional Programing / Community Updates

Meeting called to order at 5:38 followed by welcome and introductions (several new guests).

**Guest Speakers- Parent Educators:** Myra Ambrogi from Plainfield, Shannon Haney from Putnam, Cara Blackington from Killingly and Chris Millette from DayKimball.

Myra explains that the three FRC’s employee either part or full time parent educators using Parents as Teachers model. In addition, Day Kimball’s Nurturing Families Network (NFN) program has parent educators. They get involved with families/children from birth or prenatal through age 4. They work directly with families 1 on 1 with mentoring, they help families with social/emotional development – family connections (get together with other families through playgroups) and work with them to have resources they need. It’s a evidence based program – paperwork driven, it is a national program with training (Parents as Teachers). They accomplish this through home visits or community meet ups like at library, etc. They like to get into homes, see what’s going on and help with adjusting to parenthood.

Chris Millette with NFN – Day Kimball program (grant funding through OEC), across state of CT there are 50 NFN’s – every birthing hospital has NFN attached to it. They screen every mom that has a baby at DK (and collaborate with WIC Program – for prenatal moms). Intervention focused on prevention by working with parent to give parents the skills they need. They will participate in school meetings – more than happy to join in any meetings to support and help. They also do ages and stages questionnaires – starting at 2 months of age – advocate to encourage families to inquire with b-3, try to avoid the schools getting the kids for the first time with issues.

Shannon speaks re: her role in the pre-k classroom in Putnam, this gives some insight to team on what’s happening at home to see full picture of where families at.

Cara talks about how they co-collaborate to hold socialization groups with early head start, some families have high needs, group with nurturing families as well.

**Last Meeting Minutes**:

Motion to approve minutes from Tammy Miner, seconded from Sally Sherman. Approval of minutes – no objections.

**School Readiness Updates:**

Melanie discusses how school readiness grant requires monitoring of programs 3 times a year (health records, parent handbooks, licensing, classroom observations, community agency collaboration – it is at least ½ day worth of work). She reports on the recent monitoring visits:

Sterling: visited 11/8 – went well, main thing is they are working on language in handbook on how School Readiness is funded through OEC grant.

Plainfield: visited 11/14 – same handbook language as above, classroom observation - everything went well. LEP’s (learning experience plans) have to have certain requirement – small tweaks for grant.

Putnam: 10/29 – things went well, revisions of rubric, 2 classroom observations. Working on LEP and parent language in handbook as well.

Killingly 11/13 – LEP’s and parent handbook, 2 classroom observations (new teacher) – great outcome.

Brooklyn on 11/26 – Undergone change of administrations, so times spent getting them up to speed on program requirements, parent handbook updates, and classroom observations – went well.

Maryellen reports on Thompson: St. Joes and Mary Fisher today – will report feedback at next meeting as they contract out the monitoring and have not got report yet. However, OEC randomly picks SR sites to go a visit (St. Joes got visited – 3 people came and where super nice). Gave some positive feedback and was a good experience. Only Suggestion: need to remove any religious signs, statues, etc. from just preschool classroom.

Melanie reports out on the SR Subcommittee – meets to review quality components and network and share ideas. Working on annual survey to be used with families, looking at possible K transition survey (end September).

**Regional Directors Update:**

Racial Equity & Training Support Grant:

The NECC applied for and received a $3,500 grant to hold advanced training for people who participated in the two day workshop for Social Justice & Equity backing in 2016-2017. More details to follow.

Parent Alumni Mini Grant – In progress

Received $3,000 mini grant to bring together past PEP alumni to work on a community project(s). $1,500 directly used to support the projects. The group of 6 Alumni have had several meetings and have decided on two projects:

*Precious Packs:*

Children in schools who are removed from homes through DCF and go into foster care often leave home with minimal supplies and sometimes with only a few minutes to grab those items. In addition, their personal belongings are often thrown in plastics bags to take. They have decided to make “Precious Packs” – backpacks full of supplies like toiletries, stuffed animal, small blanket, book, undergarments, etc. These will be given to school social workers and family resource centers to hand out to the foster families to give to child.

*Autism & EMS – Sensory Boxes:*

Alumni parent will be expanding a project that was started in her first PEP class. She had presented to a few fire/EMS houses in town on how to work with children who have autism when they have emergency situations and donating a couple of “sensory boxes” to help those kids during a traumatic experience. Boxes included sensory items like rubber fidget items, stress balls, self-soothing items like sensory brushes and corn brushes. The alumni group will make up several more of these sensory boxes, they will be getting “recommendation” letters from past fire houses who have used these boxes and then expand the presentations to other town fire houses/police, etc. and donating more of the sensory boxes. In addition, funds will purchase extra supplies of these items so boxes can be restocked when needed.

They will be presenting their projects to the Council at the January meeting.

Regional Resource Guide: Visit neccouncil.org – download the guide and review. If you have any updates please forward by December 31, 2018, via email.

Task Force Updates:

Mental Health – flyer complete, will be sending out to group and school to recruit school staff to attend.

Attendance – meet in October, discussing hosting a regional attendance forum for school personnel and SDE re: truancy and chronic absenteeism.

**Community Champion Award Dinner - 2018 Award Recipients:**

Held October 19th, over 40 people came to support the recipients who were Colleen Lugauskas, Plainfield, Ann Lambert, Kohl’s – Regional, Lodge of Elks #574 – Putnam, Plainfield Lions & Aldrich Library – Plainfield, Jose-Michael Gonzalez – Regional.

YMCA: Winter Vacation December Camp – Week of Christmas from December 26th – 28th   
(1-3 day camps). Contact Hale YMCA camp.cutler@ghymca.org

EASTCONN Adult programs – parents improve English or HS diploma, manufacturing academy – 17 and up will receive certified production certificate – Starts January 8th, contact [cwells@eastconn.org](mailto:cwells@eastconn.org) for more information.

Lisa Audet – Linda’s House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool – located in Thompson. They just opened, Lisa worked at UMASS for 20 years working with kids born with high medical and special needs, many of these families can’t go back to work as they now have to care for their kids (these families lose careers and sense of independence). Linda’s house is different because they have a Full time school nurse there to help children 0-5 with all abilities, both Lisa and Erin (Director) come from medical backgrounds and are comfortable working with children with medical needs. There’s a need in our NE Corner – we are lacking for services. We are able to give back to the families a sense of normalcy and provide early intervention in to work with kids.

Question: How many of each age group can you take? Right now we have 15 kids (however that’s not every day), don’t want to exceed 18 per day. One of the best things is that we want to be fluid, so will be flexible based on needs.

Question: Why is it named Linda if neither of you are named Linda? Linda was a colleague that died of cancer (she was a champion of the underdog, always taking under her wing the person who needed help , the single mom, etc). We thought it was fitting to name it after her.

To learn more about them and see their programs, visit website [www.lindashousedaycare.com](http://www.lindashousedaycare.com) or call 860-315-5600

Motion to adjourn – 6:25 p.m.