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**NORTHEAST EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL**

**Monday, May 3, 2021**

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

**ZOOM Meeting**

**In Attendance:** Myra Ambrogi, Loti Bergstrom, Patricia Buell, Patty Bryant, Rena Cadro, Kristine Cicchetti, Samantha Drobiak, Paula Graef, Diane Gozemba, MaryEllen Jones, Gail Lanza, Tammy Miner, Heather Pagan, Laurence Prentiss, Emily Ross, Chistine Rosati Randall, Sally Sherman, Judith Smith, Melinda Smith, Melanie *Smith-*Cervera, Barbara Tetreault, Mark Weaver

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome
2. Guest Speaker: Beacon Health Options – IFCS Program
3. School Readiness Updates
4. NECC Updates- Regional Director
5. Regional Programing / Community Updates

**Guest Speaker:**

Beacon Health Options – IFCS (Integrated Family Care and Support. Kristen Granatek, Clinical Supervisor for Region 3 from Integrated Family Care and Support (IFCS) from Beacon Health Options presented on the IFCS program that Beacon launched in 2020 to provide care coordination to families who have had a recent DCF investigation and provide an overview of the program and eligibility. It’s a program designed to focus on the unsubstantiated population who are in need of services.

* Questions: Turnaround (how quickly do IFCS contact)? - 5 days

**School Readiness Updates:**

Thompson: Registration happening (good amount of number of people registered). Signs, banners, paper ad, radio ads. Sending out information to parents – parents don’t feel kids are ready (want to hold kids back in pre-k). Information on website why it’s important (convinced those worriers). In person screenings in June, Tom Kohl will be coming to vision screening. All distant learning has come back (except 1). Extended school year this summer (looking for ideas).

Sterling: Remain in person for session (still have 1 remote leaner) – 21 students. Advertising registration – has helped have uptick in enrollment. Completed all the monitoring visits, grant money to purchase summer engagement materials to enhance working together over the summer.

Plainfield: Summer program, separate webpage for registration, looking at new program through FRC. 14 students – 5 days a week, open all year (6-7 kids going to K). Enrollments will happen in June and may be virtual, family surveys complete, in process of staff surveys. PD is complete for year.

Killingly: Uptick in enrollment in March (when other schools opened) – 114 preschoolers, creating class lists. Have been doing PD skills, planning virtual meet and greet. End of year activities (usually have family fair), this year is doing a classroom showcase week, each class will showcase. Summer learning and family events.

Brooklyn: Full time 5 days a week, long term sub for pre-school (with remote learners). Summer academy for entire school – getting ready for that. Screenings getting done end May, site visit this week for Monitoring, working on annual report for accreditation (Portfolios). Planning transition to K orientation.

School Readiness Grant Funding RFP’s – reviewed and votes (see below for details)

**Regional Director Updates:**

Canterbury: Canterbury has requested to join our regional council as of July 1 – per our bylaws, they sent a request to the Chairs, we held a meeting with our LT and members of the Canterbury SR Council and it’s the LT’s recommendation to voting members of the Council that we expand and add Canterbury – we will be voting on that later tonight.

Grant Updates: On 4/1 We received the RFP for the “Strengthening Local early Childhood Collaboratives” continuation grant. This grant was largely for operational support for the council, which includes funding for more staff, parent stipends for “parent ambassadors” to the Council, some project support. The grant funding will run through December 31, 2021. We submitted our application on 4/16 in the amount of $40,057. We hope to hear this week if the full amount will be awarded.

Book Workshop: With the grant funding we had from our Diversity and Inclusion Grant – we are holding a Virtual Workshop on Children’s Picture Books and Race, virtual professional development exploring race and literature in the toddle and preschool classroom. Made this available to our prek staff and home and childcare center providers. We are hoping to purchase a book for everyone’s classroom who attends as well. Held this Wednesday on May 5th from 6:00-7:30 p.m. for this – we have 25 people signed up.

Panelists on the 2021 Virtual Childhood Conversations Conference April 16 & 17thWhere do we grow from here, reflections on COVID, recovery and rebuilding. OEC, SDE, CT After school network and CT Childhood Collective (participating on the Saturday 17th). Workshop: Regional Approach to Supporting Basic Needs for Children & Families.

Sparkler – APP for phones for parents that is an evidence-based, mobile family engagement platform, available in English and Spanish, which is working with the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood and 211 Child Development to help ALL Connecticut families of 0-5-year-olds. Sparkler offers: Tracking tools to monitor children’s social-emotional, cognitive, communication, and physical development, including the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®. Content that helps parents/caregivers support their children’s learning and development. Sparkler has a library of 1500+ play-based learning activities developed by early childhood educators and is adding more all the time. Messaging tools to give parents/caregivers advice and support.

Working with our NECC Communities about creating their own dashboards/codes (2 have already signed up) so when parents register using that specific code for their town/school – we will have access to their information to be able to engage with them and get them resources around developmental milestones, etc…

Regional Guides: Updating information – if anyone is interested in joining a subcommittee to meeting for a meeting to discuss updates, please let me know.

**Community Networking/Sharing:**

Kristen Hempel – Graduation of parents in the ESL, they are in process for applying citizenship, completing in HS diploma, work and employment – excited to work with people where they are. Remote activities (Chromebook loan), will continue virtual and in-person classes in Killingly and Willimantic.

Plainfield FRC – bringing families back in for play and learn, looking into OEC program this summer for extending more summer programs.

**VOTING:**

**Canterbury** – Leadership recommends that we expand Council to include the town of Canterbury. Motion to accept recommendation by Sally Sherman, seconded by Chris Rosati-Randall, all in favor - no opposed - motion passes.

**Policy Revisions:**  Revisions to NECC SR policies reviewed in folder, motion to approve NECC policy revisions by Gail Lanza, Patty Buell seconded, all in favor- no opposed – motion passes.

