

Bristol School Readiness Council
Regular Meeting
March 1, 2023

1. The regular meeting of the School Readiness Council was held on March 1, 2023 on the Zoom Meeting Platform and called to order by Chairperson Eaton at 12:17 PM.

Present: Jennifer Bilbraut, Maureen Eaton, Cecilia Garay, Siri Gilmore, Sarah Guerette, Sarah Holmes, Andrew Howe, Donna Koser, Amber Lipscomb, Alyssa McGhee, Wendy McGrath, Brenda Moore, Kristen Peck, Azra Redzic, Jennifer St. John, Valerie Toner, Leah Zukauskas

Absent: Tatiana Garcia, Erin Hamilton, Susan Adeife Lee, Valerie Pelletier

Also Present: Maegan Adam, Renee Dailey, Jackie Furniss, Jillian Romann, Pam Testa, Rachael Witkewicz

2. **Welcome and Introductions**

3. **Approval of School Readiness Council Meeting Minutes held February 1, 2023: *Motion by School Readiness Council member Jennifer St. John and seconded by Wendy McGrath, it was a unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the School Readiness Council Minutes held February 1, 2023.***

4. **Committee Updates**

- Program Quality – Maegan Adams
 - Discussed staff and enrollment updates
 - Discussed staff turnover (BCDC has 44-53% turnover, and BOE struggles to find early childhood special education teachers)
 - Discussed BristolWorks
 - Contract being finalized with Tunxis Community College
 - Start classes March 21 with 19 students registered as of today
 - Free for Bristol residents and employees working for Bristol companies
 - Discussed Office of Early Childhood updates
 - Imagine Nation approved for grant for eight new infant and toddler spaces
 - First quarter payments finally came through for Enrollment Grant, and second quarter will be this week
 - ECE Reporter continues to have lots of problems for liaisons and programs
 - Monitoring discussion about collecting proof of residency
 - Fingerprinting discussion
 - COVID test kits distributed by OEC expiration dates were extended another three months to 3/27
 - Central Registration is down a person so not likely to visit sites to help parents register their children for Kindergarten
 - Discussed CLASS trainings and how to get everyone registered
 - Rachael received large number of intervention referrals and requests
 - Discussed legislative session and Governor's budget, though everything is already different – gave example of proposed salary scale and impact to BCDC
 - Mini voice amplifiers were distributed to kindergarten teachers and principals who requested them
 - Next meeting is March 9 at 9:30 on Zoom

- Health Committee – Donna Osuch for Erin Hamilton
 - Leo drafted a flyer about benefits of structured play in English and Spanish
 - Wellness Wednesdays – discussed posting gardening videos done by the Bartles’, asking Lindsey Rivers to be a guest on a FB video and promote farms and farmers markets
 - Free seeds available from Ocean State Job Lot through online grant through UConn – several committee members requested them
 - Seed Library – Bristol Public Library and Bristol Public Works starting a seed library, and ribbon cutting and presentation was February 23, 2023
 - Began discussion of the Little Read with ideas including destigmatizing behavioral health services or seeds/growing a garden
 - Next meeting is March 14 at 3:00 on Zoom

- Governance – Sarah Holmes
 - No report

- Community Outreach – Donna Koser and Jennifer St. John
 - Family Fun Day Facebook page created by the Fire Department is live – can access through MakingBristolBetter, United Way and their page
 - If you haven’t returned your form for the event on June 17th, please complete it
 - “Build Your Village” series at the library going well – meant to help build parent community
 - Next dates are March 12 (professional organizer) & 26 at 2:30 at the library
 - Discussion at BECA meeting last hour about strategies for summer learning loss and attendance – let Donna know if interested
 - Next Outreach meeting is TBD

- Infant and Toddler – Sarah Guerette
 - Discussion about co-chair opening and possibly changing the time to work for new members – let Sarah or either Donna know if interested in joining
 - Reviewed results of survey and discussed activities related to priorities and goals, specifically maternal mental health, breastfeeding, community baby showers, and diaper changing stations in men’s restrooms
 - Next meeting is planned for March 21 at 1:30 on Zoom but may change

- Transition to Kindergarten – Rachael Witkewicz
 - Discussed ongoing transition to kindergarten activities, including:
 - Early notification forms are coming back and will be sent to schools soon
 - Transition meetings for Special Education students have concluded, and observations and PPTs will follow
 - Media blitz has begun with social media, electronic signs and soon lawn signs about registration for kindergarten
 - Discussed opportunities to expose pre-K students to typical kindergarten expectations and environment
 - Discussed the Dine and Discuss event that is held by the committee
 - Next meeting is March 20 at 3:45 on Zoom

5. School Readiness Liaison Report – Donna Osuch

- Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and other Updates
 - Imagine Nation – A Museum Early Learning Center was approved for funding for eight new infant and toddler slots
 - School Readiness first quarter Enrollment Grants were distributed last week, and the second quarter checks will go out this week
 - The 2023-2024 School Readiness Grant was just released, due May 4, 2023
 - While it's the year for the short application, OEC is reallocating slots, and we'll receive our allocation in early April
 - Liaison will send Council members materials of which they need to be aware
 - Liaisons met with the Commissioner who shared Governor's budget and technical changes OEC is proposing
 - This is the time to advocate on behalf of increased funding for School Readiness
- Local Updates
 - United Way submitted a proposal today to CHEFA for behavioral support on our behalf
 - School Readiness providers and members are presenting to parents at Cambridge Park March 8, 2023, thanks to Brenda Moore who requested the presentation
 - Liaison will attend City required Agenda and Minutes Training March 3, 2023
 - CLASS trainings have been scheduled for team with Admin Funds
 - Councilman Howe recognized the liaison for staying on the Budget Hearing (by Zoom) on February 28, 2023, until close to the end to respond to School Readiness questions

6. Quality Enhancement Report:

- New parent classes scheduled using the funds the Council redirected last month

7. Monitoring Visits Report

- Monitored student files, income verification and professional development of staff, and everyone looks good
- Meeting in March about quality components
- In February,
 - Bristol Board of Education (BOE) had 138/149 part day/part year spaces filled.
 - Bristol Child Development Center (BCDC) had 119/124 full day/full year spaces filled, and 40/40 infant/toddler spaces filled.
 - Imagine Nation, A Museum Early Learning Center (INMELC) had 118/119 full day/full year Pre-K spaces and 8/8 infant spaces filled.

8. Resignations: none

9. Appointments: none

10. Old Business: none

11. New Business: none

12. Community Sharing:

- Maegan shared her quick calculations related to the proposed salary scale:
 - It would cost \$700,000 more per year; \$350 more per student

- The Governor's proposed increase would provide less than half of what would be needed
- \$33/hour for MA and \$27/hour for BA
- Sarah Holmes shared that the FRC's are holding a Comedy Night fundraiser next Tuesday at Mt. Southington at 7:30 – she emailed the flyer

13. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 12:59 PM.

Next regular meeting date: April 5, 2023

Respectfully Submitted,
Donna Osuch
School Readiness Liaison