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**Vernon School Readiness Council
Draft Minutes
April 7, 2021
1:00 PM**

Present: Michelle Hill, Anna Figueroa, Alex Veilleux-Champagne, Allison Altieri, Kara Morse, Joan O'Donnell, Simone Sewell, Shelley McCone, Linda Hunter Williams, Jennifer Barrett, Jennifer Snyder, Jessica Ware, Cynthia Zingler, Betsy Crayton

VSRC Mission: To ensure that every child in Vernon will start school ready to learn

I. Welcome and Introductions led by Michelle Hill Council Chair

- Review of draft minutes from March
- Request for motion to accept as presented (Joan made motion- Allison seconded-All were in favor)
- March Minutes approved

II. School Readiness Grant (SR)

SR Liaison Update: Anna shared information from Alliance meeting. Covid-indoor transmission is significantly easier. Now that warmer weather is upon us, the recommendation is to have children eat outside if possible, remain masked and in pods.

Gov. Lamont has committed 120 million in stabilization assistance to childcare programs. This should be used to "fill hole" caused by Covid. The OEC will determine the mechanism for distribution.

Gov. Lamont also committed 50 million to expand Care 4 Kids. Accredited programs will receive higher reimbursement. There will also be dollars to help programs become accredited.

Monitoring: The monitoring tool is in a final draft phase and nearly ready for use.

SR Community Grant 21-22: Michelle noted grant allocations will remain the same

A. Quality Enhancement- continuation of Conscious Discipline vs alternative initiative

Michelle reminded council members that the council guides how these dollars will be used. Last year the decision was made to purchase Conscious Discipline (CD) training for Teachers.

Michelle asked for discussion on expanding this work or heading in a new direction: Joan asked about the RFP process. Michelle explained if the council decides to expand the CD work, keeping the same vendor (of which there is only one), there would not be a need for issuing an RFP. Discussion continued around providing consistency within the community using FY22 dollars to purchase CD parenting components.

Shelley asked when the current CD was going to get started as VPS would like to imbed CD in their curriculum development. Michelle noted she would take responsibility for the delay and needs to make sure funds are in the account (some actions she needs to handle). Funds will be spent before June 30th.

Jessica made a motion to continue with current vendor utilizing Quality Enhancement dollars for Conscious Discipline parent training. Allison seconded. No opposition or abstention. All were in favor. Motion Passed.

B. Program Updates

1. Program enrollment

Linda stated that the YMCA's big merger is complete, and slots are filled. They are looking to fill a couple teaching positions filled.

Shelley shared that they held the lottery and classrooms are set for next year. There are no 3 yr. olds on the waitlist. There are (14) 4 yr. olds on the waitlist. Enrollment is full and the ECE Reporter is done. Michelle thanked Shelley for her hard work on this.

2. NAEYC updates:

Accreditation:

Linda expressed that she is interested in knowing what Shelley is doing, changes that may have occurred to the process and expectations.

Shelley shared that VPS is up for re-accreditation on 2022 which in reality means the paperwork/documentation needs to be done now! A visit could occur at any point beginning in the Fall of 2021.

Shelley explained that they have been utilizing Accreditation support through EASTCONN. She noted the program portfolio is new for her too, standards have changed- they are tightened up and more concise (ex. 80% in each standard, if 1 is unmet, you will not get accredited). Shelley stated she is currently working on trying to get the Portal and Registry in line. A big project has been Preschool Program Teacher specific handbook. Portfolio is electronic now. VPS opted to use Google Docs as a mechanism for upload.

NAEYC visit can occur anytime between 7/1-12/31 2021. This is the same timeframe for the YMCA as their Accreditation is also up for renewal in 2022

Simone stated she would reach out to Shelley re: Google Doc.'s. Shelley added there are less folders but more detail. You input standard and then show evidence.

III. School Readiness Partner updates

Jen Snyder (EASTCONN) discussed the following:

- -Serving families in Tolland County through HS and EHS Home-based programming
- -New recruitment idea- invested \$ into running a Google Ad Campaign
- -EASTCONN is working on a big 5 yr. Community Assessment and are looking deeply into Windham and Tolland. They will be sending out a community partner on-line survey. The Assessment itself will be available online as well.
- -Laura Lybarger will send demographics by county
- -Michelle asked if they are looking at health. Jen replied Yes

Alex Veilleux-Champagne discussed:

- -Completed application for preschoolers 3 days/w and can now accept. Will share link to application and requests forwarding for children who are in need of programming.

Joan O'Donnell:

- -Playgroups are still running 2 days/w
- -Taking applications for OEC Home Visiting Program
- -The Family Development Center moved to 26 Haynes Street, Manchester
- -Target 2x/m for I/T thru EHS and other playgroups. Everything is virtual

Betsy Crayton:

- Birthing Center reports there is a Covid baby boom happening. May-August could be potentially the highest # ever

Michelle noted:

- The town is making decisions on summer programing- Park & Rec (Rick not present).
- Summer nutrition programming will still go on
- Summer Employment and Youth Program: local job site locations...possibly for EC students- 120hrs/6 weeks

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes submitted by: Anna Figueroa, SR Liaison