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**Vernon School Readiness Council**  
**Minutes**  
**May 5, 2021**  
**1:00 PM**

Present: Michelle Hill, Anna Figueroa, Alex Veilleux-Champagne, Simone Sewell, Shelley McCone, Linda Hunter Williams, Jennifer Barrett, Jennifer Snyder, Ruth Sales

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

**I. Welcome and Introductions -Michelle Hill Council Chair**

- Review of draft minutes from April
- Request for motion to accept as presented (Ruth made motion- Jen Barrett seconded-All were in favor)
- April Minutes approved

**School Readiness Grant (SR)** – Michelle noted the SR Grant went before Town Council and was approved “Thumbs Up”! 3,881 in QE also approved. Conscious Discipline subscriptions for teachers were purchased for the online course (75)

**SR Liaison Update:** Anna shared information from both the recent Alliance meeting and weekly Child Care Updates.

- OEC will begin accepting applications on Monday for Stabilization funds. Programs that are licensed and receive Care 4 Kids are automatically eligible. The is non-competitive dollars!! If a program would like an estimate of their available \$, they can go the 211 website where there is a estimation application. If programs need further support they can call 211 at 1-800-505-1000. There is also a webinar on the stabilization funds on OEC website. Linda, stated the “Y” has their supplier # and are all set to receive these funds. Anna was curious whether or not a small amount of the funds could be used to provide a sign on bonus for new teachers...as it is proving to be a difficult time to hire teachers.
- Chris Soto from SDE joined the weekly update’s meeting to discuss two available grant opportunities for towns, municipalities, youth camps, Park & Rec’s. 1) Expansion Grants for school aged children 5-18 for summer programming. 2) Innovation Grants for regional or state scaled programs. \$4.4 million dollars will be made available through these grants with the goal of providing youth with “learning through purposeful play” opportunities.
- Details regarding who can apply, required information & partnerships, as well as, guidance on the application process is online at SDE. You must be a non-profit to apply. Fast turnaround! -applications are due Monday 5/10
- Merrill Gay also stated on the call that there will be federal dollars coming into the state for Child Care Facility improvements. Stayed tuned.

**Monitoring:** There were changes to the Registry that we were unaware of. In order to be recognized in the system, Programs need to enter a specific report and select a teacher-whether or not they need any updates on that page. This is a monthly requirement of OEC.

**SR Community Grant 21-22:** See above

### A. Quality Enhancement- Conscious Discipline CD

Michelle reiterated that our membership for CD was purchased. She believes we will have extra registrations for teachers and is aware that HS may benefit from a couple as well as Alex's preschool program. Michelle stated she has been very impressed with CD and the approach to teachers focusing on their emotional state and self-awareness prior to helping children work on these skills. Programs will need to decide the number of registrations they need and for whom. In 2021-2022, we will focus on parents and hope to grow together as a community!

### B. Program Updates

#### 1. Program enrollment

Linda stated they have been very busy. They have had an increase in calls and their waitlist has grown. They will be graduating more than ½ of their children. They will be hiring for the increase/influx of children.

Shelley shared that they are fully enrolled and busy as ever.

#### 2. NAECY Updates: none

## II. School Readiness Partner updates

Michelle noted

- Parks & Rec will be operating a summer program
- Center 375 will have a camp
- Vernon Center Middle School will have a ½ day camp
- Free summer meals (breakfast and lunch) will be provided in drive up fashion

Jen Snyder (EASTCONN) discussed the following:

- -Serving families in Tolland County through HS and EHS Home-based programming
- -Looking for new families
- -EASTCONN's 5 yr. Community Assessment is looking deeply into Windham and Tolland. A community partner on-line survey has gone out. The Assessment itself will be available online as well.
- -Laura Lybarger sent the email. Ruth asked for a resend.
- -HS is also receiving Covid \$. There is additional dollars to purchase new playground equipment.

Shelley

- Lottery went well. Spots are filled
- Knee deep in NAEYC, PPTing, and screening for May, June, July children
- Excited to announce the hiring of a Full Day Kindergarten Teacher (last name Gouyn) who will be at Skinner Rd.
- Curriculum writing going well- focusing on learning through play & ELDS-constantly adapting
- 4 of 5 teachers working on AQIS

Ruth

- ECCP is doing some face to face visits as well as virtual. Some center still not allowing folks in. Protocol exists to limit cross-contamination, can only visit one family or one site during the day. The work is very individual based on center and family.
- Core classroom work is 3m. Child specific is 6w. There is a waitlist.

Jen Barrett

- Child First is trying to meet face to face once a month, then virtual.
- 16 on waitlist currently.
- Parent Pals: Caregiving with newborns
- Unfortunately, OEC will be making cuts to the program. They are down a site and looking for additional funding. Darcy Lowell in negotiations with OEC.
- Ruth stated the possibility of connecting with other programs as dollars come into those programs.

Alex Veilleux-Champagne discussed:

- Dropped link in Zoom to share her flyer.
- She is still not sure of her schedule for the fall so she can plan for the kids.

Meeting Adjourned

Minutes submitted by: Anna Figueroa, SR Liaison