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Regular Meeting
Vernon School Readiness Council
(VSRC)
Fully Virtual
June 1, 2022
1:00pm
Draft Minutes

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

I. Welcome and Introductions

Present Members: Cynthia Zingler, Allison Altieri, Shelley McCone, Kaytee Walters, Sherry Yarusewicz, Kimberly Manganella, Heidi Ciampa, Michelle Hill, Betsy Crayton, Anna Figueroa
*Michelle noted this will be our last meeting before summer. The Council will reconvene in September.

II. Review and Approval of draft minutes for 5/4/2022

Allison noted a correction: The “playdate” occurs at the library. Virtual playgroups are run together by Allison and Joy. Correction to minutes made by Michelle.

A motion to accept the 5/4/22 draft minutes with the above correction was made by Kimberly and seconded by Allison. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Strengthening Local Early Childhood Collaboration- Vernon’s Better Together Initiative –

A. Anna prepared an Idea Boardz to be created together during our virtual meeting. The goal was to get feedback from our Council Members/Community Stakeholders on Vernon's Birth to 5 system. The questions provided ahead of time were as follows:

What key services and supports are currently available for families and children 0-5 in the community?

Where are gaps in the current system? Are there under-utilized services and supports?

Where do you see opportunities to strengthen the system?

What resources can you or your agency contribute to strengthen the system?

What assessments do you currently use to assess family needs? What are the biggest unmet needs of children and families?

What are some opportunities for reaching out to parents of young children?

All members are encouraged to keep adding ideas to the Board. We will revisit in September when we reconvene.

VBT Coordinator & Parent update: Kimberly shared that the Parent Ambassadors will be going out into the community to share the survey and encourage parent to fill out.

They will target marginalized families and frequent area such as: Park West, Library and Bus Stops. Through discussion, Council members added the following: Lending libraries, Rails to Trails, Parks and Rec., Henry Park playground, Maternity Care Center, ECHN Home Visitation Program, Head Start and other ECE programs in town, etc.

Betsy shared that their Early Pregnancy Class was a direct result of a survey they had done. Betsy also suggested touching base with Donna Carmon?-ECHN Nurse Navigator Sherry raised the concern over baby formula shortage and asked about WIC in Vernon. It seems as though WIC is no longer located in Vernon. However, Michelle felt formula was being distributed though Vernon's local food pantries and shelters. Sherry stated she

knows Kim Boulette? Who has a leadership role in WIC. She offered to give her a call to learn how Vernon is being served.

B. School Readiness Liaison - Grant updates

Anna reports not much to update here. Waiting on grant approval. Onsite monitoring visits occurring. Dollars for infant and toddler care is being made available by OEC. OEC is approaching current providers of infant/toddler care to explore expansion possibilities.

A current survey is out. CT's "deserts" are being targeted.

IV. Program Updates

A. Accreditation update

B. Program Enrollment

Both programs are fully enrolled.

C. Program Highlights

YMCA Kaytee- Nothing too new. A changing table that was back ordered finally came in. The empty available room will become a 2yr old room. Licensed capacity will stay the same grouping children differently. Infants will have their own room, 1yr old's will have their own room and 2yr old's will have their own room. Once the health department approves and OEC measures they will be good to go.

VPS Shelley- Nothing has changed since our last meeting. Winding down the year and processing enrollments. 27 families are on the waitlist. June 17th has been set as a hard deadline for registration. Only two families declined the lottery. Anna will be out to visit this Friday.

V. Partner Updates

Partner updates were shared.

Cynthia- asked that member continue to encourage families with kindergarteners to get registration done now. Discussion about Ready, Set, Fair began. Everyone there seemed to really like the outside vibe. The fire truck was a huge hit. The person who manned it said he had a great time and would do it again.

Heidi, Parent Ambassador- shared a story of a wonderful connection with a mom during the Fair. Mom appeared to be very nervous about her child's transition to middle school. Heidi spent a half hour talking with her, supporting her and sharing her knowledge. By the end of their conversation, mom was much more comfortable. Kimberly added, her whole-body demeanor changed in a very positive way.

Allison - The Ready Set School Fair- many folks were engaged in deep/long conversations with families.

Michelle reminded everyone that we will reconvene in Sept. Wishes for everyone to have a great summer.

Allison made motion to adjourn. Betsy seconded and the meeting was adjourned

Submitted by:

Anna Figueroa