

Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting
Thursday, September 10, 2020
12:30 pm
Meeting Via Zoom

SRC Members Present:

Dena Booker	SPS Family Resource Facilitator/ McKinney-Vento Coordinator
Terri Drew – Co Chair	Director of Youth Services City of Stamford,
Karen Feder – Co Chair	Director of Youth Services, ABILIS
Helma Gregorich	Nurturing Families Network Program Manager, Family Centers
Elizabeth McKay	Youth Services Librarian, Ferguson Library
Barbara McLaughlin	Manager of Early Childhood and Volunteers, Kids In Crisis

Grant Recipients/Advisors/Guests:

Antonia Better-Wirz	Education Manager, AOK
Kathy Belmont	SPS Instructional Coordinator
Kendra Brown	Director of Early Childhood, SPS
Lisa Cody	Curriculum Associate, SPS
Tamika Cope	Parent Participant
Phyllis DiFrancia	Assistant Director, CLC William Pitt
Jane Faherty	Director, Jumpstart
Marsha Guthrie	Director, CLC Head Start Programs
Yazmin Iglesias	Director, All Our Kin – Stamford Norwalk
Jackie Heftman	SPS Board of Education Representative
Penny Lehman	Director, CLC Program Services
Kate Murphy	Assistant Director, Child First
Tiffany Olenik	Early Childhood Consultant, ECCP
Enrique Pabon	Education Manager, CLC Maple and CLC Early Head Start
Ellen Reardon	Director, Stamford Museum and Nature Center Nursery School
Marie Roc	Disability and Mental Health Manager, CLC
Dr. Debbie Schreiner	SPS Instructional Coordinator
Lauren Scopez-Daunais	Vice President of Strategy & Operations, Stamford Cradle to Career
Tashi Shuler-Drakes	Project Associate, Cradle to Career
Tara Stickney	Parent Participant, SRC Meeting Volunteer
Inge-Lise Titeradge	Early Childhood Consultant, ECCP
Nathalie Tocci	Care to Care Coordinator, Family Centers
Dori Walker	SPS Instructional Coordinator
Anna Witkowski	Director of School Readiness Programs, CLC

I. Welcome

Karen Feder welcomed all and attendance was taken virtually.

II. Approval of Minutes

June 2020 minutes were unanimously approved.

III. School Readiness Provider Reports June, July, August, 2020 – Kendra Brown, SPS and Anna Witkowski, CLC

- Provider reports are attached here as Addendum A, B, and C for BOE at Rippowam, CLC William Pitt, CLC Palmers Hill, CLC Westover, CLC Lathon Wider, CLC Franklin Commons. CLC Maple will provide their written report following this meeting.
- Directors discussed distance learning, enrollment, participation and adjustments.

IV. School Readiness Liaison Report – Donna Arcuri

- FY 21 RFP Guidance was emailed and reviewed by the SRC.
- SR and CDC Programs were funded by the OEC for the remainder of FY20 and for the months of July and August 2020 regardless of utilization.
- Funding was reviewed for July and August 2020. Utilization reports were emailed on August 31, 2020 and reviewed with members and attendees. The report cannot be attached to these minutes. Permission is not granted for copying OEC documents. CLC July Utilization: 206 – onsite, 40 – distance learners, 306 – total utilization. CLC August Utilization: 310 - onsite, 40 – distance learners, 350 – total utilization.
- The OEC has revised utilization reports for September – June FY 21.
- During July and August programs were funded based on classrooms offering on site services for 7-10 children with reduced hours and virtual learning offerings.
- During July and August, CLC offered both virtual learning at no fee and on site learning at limited capacity.
- School Readiness providers were asked to re-submit FY 21 RFP's with added distance and hybrid learning options. SPS requested 16 school day slots to be offered in the hybrid model. SPS will offer distance learning on Fridays. CLC requested 406 full day, 60 extended day and 66 part day slots which at this time will be offered as distance learning slots. The same reimbursement is offered for all. Final applications were shared with the SRC on August 31, 2020 via email. The applications cannot be attached to these minutes as permissions are not granted for copying by the OEC.
- SR classrooms will offer shortened hours to maintain social distancing, each classroom's cohort and staffing requirements.
- A waiver for shortened hours has been sent to the OEC to be able to safely maintain cohorts. The waiver was approved by SRC chairs via email on August 24, 2020.
- Preschool classroom capacity was increased by the OEC for September to a maximum 16 children.
- Sept – June utilization reports: The draft report received from the OEC will financially penalize larger programs with multiple sites if they do not fill each classroom with 16 children. Some SR classrooms are not licensed for 16 children. A request was made to the OEC to consider revising this report.
- The new reporting form for both SR and CDC will include children's names. It is not recommended that these be emailed, even with a password. The School Readiness Council is in need of a secure portal for sharing information
- On behalf of the SRC, Donna Arcuri organized a meeting with Stamford's Health Department and Stamford's community programs at the August Stamford Early Childhood Director's Group. Jody Bishop-Pullan, Assistant Health Director joined the meeting and answered questions.
- Nathalie Tocci, the Nurse Consultant funded by School Readiness Quality Enhancement, participated and answered questions.
- As a result of this meeting, Nathalie provided information to Donna Arcuri, to create a snapshot Health guide for Stamford's early childhood providers. This document was emailed to all Stamford's early childhood community and contains guidance and links directly from the OEC and CDC. Nathalie created a FAQ page to be included in the document.

- Due to budget cuts and the end of their grant funding, Stamford no longer has preschool classrooms in any of the elementary schools.
- Donna has been working with the reopening task force in outreach to childcare programs in Stamford that are interested in providing daycare on distance learning days to elementary school children.
- SR Programs were asked to confirm and re-enter data in the ECIS system.
- Masks for young children– it was announced that guidance will come out on Friday. The OEC is will be aligning guidance with the Academy of Pediatrics, SDE and DPH.
- Supplies – Cloth masks were offered to all licensed providers and their employees in Stamford. At least one package of 5 cloth and washable masks per employee.
- Adult Education information was shared with SR providers and community providers electronically.
- Free testing is being offered to daycare providers and information can be found on the OEC Website.
- Due to changing dismissal times, Kendra Brown of SPS proposed a time change of the SRC meetings to 12:00 noon. All those in attendance were agreeable. Donna will email the voting membership to confirm agreement.

V. FY 21 Quality Enhancement Allocation Discussion – Donna Arcuri

- Current Quality Enhancement funding distribution and provider activities were emailed to the SRC on September 2, 2020. It was requested that members consider the current approved distribution of funds and activities provided.
- Additional Quality Enhancement activities covered under the School Readiness grant were provided to the SRC.
- Stamford’s early childhood Quality Enhancement allocation will remain the same (\$48,970) until June 2021. Members were asked to re-assess community needs.
- A revised FY 21 application will be provided at a later date not yet announced by the OEC.
- Stamford’s previously SRC approved Quality Enhancement funding activities were reviewed.
 1. Nurse consultant to offer (at a discount), health, safety, environmental safety and compliance to all of Stamford’s providers (BOE programs, both funded and non-funded center-based and
 2. Family home provider educational consultant(s) to provide educational professional development to family home care providers.
- Members were asked if they would like to reassess Stamford’s Quality Enhancement spending.
- Members voted unanimously to maintain the funding as is.
- Donna reported she would send an email confirming this vote to all voting members.

VI. Kindergarten Registration – Dena Booker,

- Dena reported that at this time approximately 947 kindergarten students were completely registered for kindergarten and another 100 were pending approval.

- Dena encouraged early registration and asked all to participate in encouraging the community to register their children early.

VII. Stamford Early Childhood Community Health and Safety Update – Nathalie Tocci, Family Centers

- Nathalie reported the past year and current year is challenging for early childhood providers.
- Nathalie and Care to Care has been educating both centers and home daycare how to group/cohort their staff and children in their programs.
- EC programs had to learn to spot symptoms and make decisions on closing classrooms or the entire program.
- PPE was and is difficult to find. Proper hand washing needs to be repeated throughout each day.
- Since re-opening, group sizes in some cases have gone from 20-5.
- CDC and OEC policies are changing daily.
- Care to Care will continue to be a support system for Stamford’s providers in need of guidance.

VIII. Stamford Cradle to Career Update (SSC2C)– Tashi Shuler Drakes

- Health Equity Listening Sessions- SSC2C is encouraging partner and families to participate.
- Stamford Summer Literacy Initiative- SC2C’s Early Grade Reading CAN conducted a small successful pilot for our SSLI with preliminary results that have pointed to some success in our literacy support moving the needle. Further support provided to families through the Ferguson’s Library Every Child Ready to Read curriculum. SC2C is working close with the Library and SPEF.
- Bridge to College- SC2C reached over 900 students through text message reminders about key enrollment steps over the summer. 112 students have requested and are being given more intensive assistance through one on one support from one of the 4 counselors. Preliminary data shows that 70-80% of them are enrolled in college.
- Skill Building for Success- SC2C had several interns assist with creating resources for the Skill Building for Success Essential Skills initiative. They are working on building a common language and awareness for these skills in Stamford through data received from the Mayor’s Youth Employment Program’s intern summer survey.
- Stamford Stands Against Racism- A small group is working together on the follow-up from the Call to Action: Stamford Stands Against Racism. SC2C is helping to plan the work moving forward.
- SC2C has decided to help fundraise and plan is a virtual training series for community members around racial justice and equity work. The plan is to have speakers and local organization leaders lead this work. The first session is planned for October and through the year.
- Convening- The StriveTogether Convening is scheduled for September 18 through September 25th. SC2C will be bringing back those learnings to the larger network for those who are unable to attend.

IX. Adjourn

Addendum A



Stamford BOE @ Rippowam
School Readiness Council Report
June 2020

- **Program Utilization**
 - a. Authorized Capacity: 16 School Day, School Year slots
 - b. Spaces currently occupied 16
 - c. Ages: 4 year-olds
 - d. Students with disabilities: 1

- **Program Attendance:**

Because we only began the year two days ago I cannot comment on attendance trends.

- **Staffing:**

Staffing is in place.

- **Training:**
 - a. Teacher attended several workshops this month on using the Google Suite in distance learning.
 - b. Teacher is working toward her 097 certification in remedial reading

- **Activities During Closure:**
 - a. During the closure from March 13th through the end of the school year, all teaching was delivered virtually through the use of Zoom. The classroom teacher implemented our preschool curriculum virtually. She actively engaged students through a blend of synchronous and asynchronous activities, going above and beyond to assist families in keeping their children engaged in learning. She utilized Class Dojo to communicate with parents, which enabled her posts to be translated into Spanish. Parents were then able to answer in Spanish and this app translated the response into English. It proved invaluable during the closure.

- **Hybrid Model:**

- a. On September 8th we opened our school for the first time since last March. We will be meeting in person with our students Monday through Thursday, with Friday set aside for deep cleaning.
- b. Students will begin the year with a unit on All About Me and will spend time becoming familiar with the routines involved in attending preschool, especially during the pandemic.
- c. The classroom teacher is planning on teaching in monthly units based on the project approach as we have in the past.
- d. Once students arrive and get used to routines, the teacher will implement learning centers in the safest way possible, although many centers will have to be modified to accommodate social distancing.
- e. A more detailed report will follow in October, once we are up and running.

Addendum B

School Readiness Report

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County

July/August 2020

CLC William Pitt/ CLC Lockwood

- **Program Utilization:** Hours of Operation 8-4:30pm (M-F)
3 sessions of 7.5 hrs/day offered: 8-3:30pm, 8:30-4pm, 9-4:30pm

Total number cohorts: 11 (William Pitt-7, Lockwood-4)

10 children per cohort

Staggered times for drop off and pick up has allowed for social distancing of families.
Provided separate entrances and traffic patterns in the building.

- **Staffing:**
Staff patterns have been adjusted to meet the needs of each cohort with NO intermingling or sharing of staff. Staff shifts have remained the same in total hours worked, but times have been adjusted to accommodate the changes in drop off and pick up of children.
Masks are required and social distancing.
- **Curriculum Focus:**
 - a. Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the CTELDS and the individual needs of the children.
 - b. Teachers focusing on Preschool RULER- Reinforcing Emotional Intelligence in the classroom. Especially during the pandemic, this area has been addressed carefully. New language and routines for children include; mask, social distancing, change in classroom environment, individual art supplies, smaller class size, sanitizer use, etc.
 - c. Distance Learning: Connecting with families at home. Due to new protocols which prohibits families access to the classroom for safety precautions, teachers reach out to families to share information about their child's day through:
 1. Family Support Plan
 2. Weekly phone calls
 3. Emails
 - d. Collaboration: Columbia University Medical Center- virtual presentation 9/15
- **Monthly Meetings:** All virtual
 - a. Education Coordinators

- b. Head Teacher
- c. Cluster/classroom meeting
- d. Component
- **Family Engagement:**
 - a. Google meet for Parent Advisory Council: 9/29 at 12pm
 - b. Family Lesson Plan- emailed home
 - c. Teachers call families weekly
 - d. New Parent Orientation: 9/24 (12pm and 1:30pm) Eng/Spa
- **Professional Development:** To include addendums related to Covid-19
 - a. Health & Safety
 - b. Medication/Epi-Pen
 - c. Policy & Procedures
 - d. Nutrition
 - e. Civil Rights
 - f. Mandated Reporter- DCF
 - g. OEC Webinars
 - h. CES- Distance Learning
 - i. NAEYC- Curriculum
 - j. Social/Emotional: Mindfulness
 - k. Race & Equity
- **September:**
 - a. Instructional Coordinators returning: Supporting and mentoring teachers with Distance Learning and Family Engagement
 - b. Bookmobile- limited access
 - c. Professional Development

Addendum C

CLC

Palmers Hill, Westover, Franklin Commons, Lathon Wider

July 2020

Program Enrollment

- Infant Room- 2 openings
- Toddler Room- Full
- State Funded Preschool Fully enrolled at 10 children per classroom

Staff Opening

- Infant Room Head Teacher position (full time)
- Palmers Hill Pre K Head Teacher position (full time)
- Franklin Commons Head Teacher position (full time)

Family Engagement - April through August

- Zoom meetings with classroom teachers, children and families scheduled at different times of day, morning, afternoon and evening, to accommodate working families. Meeting scheduled at least 2 times per month
- Weekly phone check ins to assess families need for support
- Daily Emails to families containing a Weekly Family Lesson Plan, photos of children and classroom, SPS Kindergarten Information, Family Community Events, Referral Opportunities, Food Pantries, Mask Distribution Center locations, etc.
- Social media; Facebook and Instagram posts containing classroom activities and suggestions for family activities.
- Social Media Family concerts (Friday evening and Saturday morning) with DJ April Larken (Paying Tribute to All Working Moms) and Sonia De Los Santos (Latin Grammy Nominee, Singing for Children and Families)
- Employees of Bridgewater Associates donated 100+ hot dinners to our CLC families who were identified with food insecurity
- Westhill High student group (Westhill Angels) conducted a Book Drive collecting gently used books from the community to be distributed to our CLC children
- A donation of 1100 books from Harper Collins, consisting of 2 titles of *Pete The Cat*, to be given to CLC children at the start of the new school

Virtual Meetings/Trainings

- CLC Senior Staff Meetings (Mondays)
- Child Development Education Team Meeting (Weekly)
- CLC Reopening Committee Meeting (Every Tuesday, April through August)
- COVID 19 Health and Guidance Training for staff , 6/17, in preparation for July/August Center Reopening
- CLC Education Committee , 7/1

- CLC Distance Learning Meeting, 7/2
- CLC Strategic Plan Steering Committee Meeting, 7/7
- Teacher Meeting, 7/15
- CLC Marketing Meeting, 7/17
- ‘No Small Matter’ – CAEYC, 7/21, viewing followed by discussion
- Back to School Workshop – ECCP, 7/24
- G Suite Tech Training -7/27 through 7/31

Classroom Events

- Activities/Children’s Literature/Group Discussions enabling children to gain a better understanding of the virus and new COVID classroom environment, health and safety protocols
- Moving our indoor classrooms, learning experiences to the outdoors as much as possible
- Continuing Yale RULER for social and emotional well being
- Water Days

Implementation of New Health and Safety Protocols during COVID 19 Reopening of CLC

- With the exception of staff and children no one is allowed to enter CLC building(s)
- Staggered and shortened hours for every classroom
- Increased entrances for children; many entering directly into their classroom
- PPE supplied to all staff
- Three teachers assigned to every classroom
- No floating or substitute teachers to minimize movement
- Daily temperature screening for all staff and children prior to entering the building
- Temperature check done by the child’s teacher-staff and children who have a temperature of 100 degrees or high are not permitted into the program
- Children’s hands to be sanitized by teacher at entrance when soap and water is not available
- Child signed in/out and escorted to/from the classroom by her teacher
- Daily Health Questionnaire completion for staff and children prior to entering CLC
- Masks to be worn by staff at ALL times when inside or outside the building
- Families must wear a mask and remain 6 ft from others when dropping off and picking up their child at the building/classroom entrance
- Increased cleaning, sanitizing and disinfection of surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys, games manipulatives in between use by different children
- Outdoor and playground equipment disinfected between use by different groups of children
- Every child supplied with her own set of crayon, markers, playdough, etc.
- Increased handwashing throughout the day for children and staff
- Children are social distanced as much as possible, especially during center time, table time, meal time and nap time
- Teachers and children remaining home due to illness require a doctor’s note to return to the building
- Children sent home due fever cannot return before 72 hours, must be fever free and have a doctor’s note to return
- Children and teachers who have tested positive to the virus must be symptom free for 14days since symptoms began and no fever for 72 hours with no fever reducing medicine

and have marked improvement of symptoms and supply CLC's nurse with a doctor's note of date of return to school

- If COVID 19 is diagnosed in a child or staff member CLC will follow the guidelines set forth by the State of CT, OEC, CDC and the Local Health Department; is now considered a reportable disease

Addendum D

CLC

Palmers Hill, Westover, Franklin Commons, Lathon Wider

August 2020

Program Enrollment

- Infant Room- 3 openings
- Toddler Room- 1 opening
- State Funded Preschool Fully enrolled at 10 children per classroom

Staff Opening

- Palmers Hill Room 5 Pre K Head Teacher position (full time)

Family Engagement - April through August

- Zoom meetings with classroom teachers, children and families scheduled at different times of day, morning, afternoon and evening, to accommodate working families. Meeting scheduled at least 2 times per month
- Weekly phone check ins to assess families need for support
- Daily Emails to families containing a Weekly Family Lesson Plan, photos of children and classroom, SPS Kindergarten Information, Family Community Events, Referral Opportunities, Food Pantries, Mask Distribution Center locations, etc.
- Social media; Facebook and Instagram posts containing classroom activities and suggestions for family activities.
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Virtual Meetings/Trainings

- CLC Senior Staff Meetings (Mondays)
- Alliance Meetings (Mondays)
- Child Development Education Team Meeting (Weekly)
- CLC Reopening Committee Meeting (Every Tuesday, June through August)

- G Suite Tech Trainings, offered to staff throughout August
- OEC, Distance Learning Webinar, 8/4
- CLC FACE Committee Meeting, 8/7
- SC2C FACE CAN Meeting, 8/13
- Child Development program Education Team Meeting, 8/20
- Child Development Staff Orientation, 8/21, 8/24 and 8/25-CLC Policies and Procedures Review, Anti-bias and Equity Staff Training
- CLC Marketing and Messaging Meeting, 8/27
- Distance Learning Curriculum Planning Meeting with Head Start and School Readiness Program education teams, 8/28

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