

# ***Bristol Early Childhood Alliance***

## Zoom Meeting Notes

August 4, 2021 (11:00 – 12:00 p.m.)

**In attendance:** Meagan Adams, Maureen Eaton, Kate Kerchaert, Donna Koser, Donna Osuch, Aysa Perez-Dean, Rebecca Rossi, Mary Alice Petrucelli-Timek, and Valerie Toner

Members were invited to introduce themselves.

**Community Outreach** – Donna K. shared the Farmer’s Market and the Bristol Music in Park at Rockwell distribution of Adopt a Reading Buddy and Appetite for Reading book went very well. Volunteers will be at Rockwell park for two more Bristol Park and Rec Music events in August. The next Outreach Committee meeting will be held on August 12 at 11:00 a.m. – all are welcome.

### **Collaborating Grants:**

Donna O. shared a few updates:

The Early Childhood Funder Collaborative Grant awarded United Way funds to plan regional collaboration. The first meeting was held in July and was positive and discussion was engaging. A few of the initial topics that programs are interested in are as follows: **filling open preschool slots, breaking down silos, implicit bias, social & emotional learning (Play and Executive Functioning Skills), etc.** A survey will be sent out to all programs to see if there are other needs that were not listed. This grant is hoped to provide a few regional “get together’ s” (either in person or virtually), with one or two parent/community focused gatherings. If you are interested in joining this committee, please reach out to Donna at [dkoser@uwwestcentralct.org](mailto:dkoser@uwwestcentralct.org).

Sparkler is ongoing and an initial “check in” meeting was held in July.

Donna O. also mentioned funding from the Main Street Community Foundation has been secured to develop a volunteer portal. The goal is to point volunteers to the no-profit that matches their skill set and/or passion. This could be one-time opportunities (large or small), ongoing volunteer hours, etc. The program is also hoped to gather volunteer hours per site and portal.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Infant & Toddler** – The committee continues to move forward with the Breastfeeding in the Park event planned for August 7<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of August 8<sup>th</sup>. Shoprite will be providing snacks, the Bristol Lions Club will sponsor the Ice Cream Truck and hope to have a Lion dressed in costume for photo ops, BECA will have Reading Buddies for adoption, WIC will be enrolling families via a computer, etc.

**Health Committee** – Nothing to report.

**Transition to K.** – Ready4K reached 500 enrollments, but each day new families are added and others opt out. There are 750 paid slots for families and Mary-Alice reminded programs to continue to enroll new families as they enter programs. The firetruck on the first day of school ride will be offered to a child entering Kindergarten at IVY Drive.

### **Community Sharing:**

**Child First** – Aysa shared that Bristol’s waitlist is open. Enrollment wait list is a bit long due to an open vacancy. It is anticipated that this role will be filled shortly. Rebecca shared that Bristol now has two teams serving the community.

**MSCF** – The Men and Boys Fund grant is open and available on the website [www.mainstreetfoundation.org](http://www.mainstreetfoundation.org) and is due August 27<sup>th</sup>. **Child First** – Still working on the Waitlist. Please continue to refer families.

**Head Start** – Renovations are ongoing. Early Head Start will move forward with a lower capacity with three classrooms opening in Sept. (half capacity). There are 24 homebased slots that are not full. The waitlist is intensive. Lake Avenue is planning to open in January.

**Bristol Preschool** – currently embarking on a name change process - from Bristol Preschool to Bristol Child Development Center. Currently, the center will not be opening a 3 year old classroom due to enrollment and staff. Bristol Preschool is currently seeking staff and asks members to share information widely. Donna O. mentioned there may be funding from ARPA in the near future to help programs with funding needs. More information will be shared when appropriate.

**United Way** - American Rescue Plan Act Produce Box Program events are planned for August 5 and August 19th from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. or until boxes run out at Bristol PW Garage (95 Vincent P. Kelley Road, Bristol, CT). Please share the event widely from the United Way of West Central CT Facebook page. Adopt a Child Program is still in need of donors. If you are able to adopt a child and provide a backpack, school supplies and a first day of school outfit, please reach out to Kimberly at [khernandez@uwestcentralct.org](mailto:khernandez@uwestcentralct.org) A large donation of Hand Sanitizer will be arriving to the United Way office in the next week. They will be given out at the Produce Box distribution and provided to families in the Adopt a Child Program. Donna O will reach back out to programs when they become available to the community. There will be plenty for everyone.

NEXT BECA MEETING: September 1, 2021