

School Readiness Meeting Notes
Branford Community House
46 Church Street
January 15, 2025

Council Members Present are in Bold: Dale Izzo, Robin Comey, Dr. Chris Tranberg, James Cosgrove, Rachael Kalman, Ariana Loyola, Diane Pappacoda, Crystal Pelletier, Carole Weisberg, Emily Yates, Charles Cicarella, Deidre Popkin, Lauren Skultety, Melissa Hey, Kaliula Spears-Burgess, Laura Gunneson

The Meeting was called to order by Dale Izzo at 1:05 PM

1. Meeting minutes from the last meeting were not available for approval
2. SR Liaison Report
 - The SR council was awarded 6 additional SR slots to BELC. This brings the total SR Slots for Branford up to 34. (16 at BELC plus 18 at FRC).
 - Early Start CT update:
 - Carole gave a report about the new protocol for requesting funds for FY 2026 through Early Start CT. Each of our sites had to submit a simplified RFA available to currently funded programs. The FRC and BELC submitted their applications by December 12th and are waiting for more information and/or approval. This is a change as in the past the sites have submitted to the Council and the Council has sent in the application for the community. Once OEC completes this process, there will be a new round of funding through a more involved RFP process that provides opportunities to add spaces but also opens funding to all ECE programs not currently funded by the state. This will be very competitive.
 - It was also announced that Early Start CT funding will not be going through eGMS.
 - OEC has let us know that there is additional funding for family fees for the month of February attendance for both our sites. The funds will be direct deposited to the BOE and not go through eGMS. The SR families will then be reimbursed with these funds.
 - Legislative update: Carole reviewed the changes of requirements Teachers who are designated qualified staff members (DQSM) beginning on July 1, 2025.
3. Program Site Report:
 - a. FRC: Lauren reported that they have full enrollment. Lauren also reported on possible changes at BPS/FRC. Looking at expanding to full-day public pre-k options for families.
 - b. Ariana Loyola was not able to attend the meeting. All their SR slots are full.
4. School/Community Programs:
 - a. Blackstone Library: They are rolling out a new program 1000 books before kindergarten.
 - b. ESDHD: They are still working with the community through nurturing families.
5. Old Business:
 - a. Pre-School fair: The council has decided that with the long waitlist at BELC and FRC along with programs in the community not being able to attend, the Preschool Fair will be cancelled. The council will focus on the Week of the Young Child Event.
 - b. The resource guides are still being passed out throughout the community.

6. New Business: The subcommittee for the Week of the Young Child will begin meeting. Since we may not have programs/community information tables, there was discussion about changing the focus to a Community Play Date for children and opportunity for parents networking.
7. Public Comment: none
8. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn. 1st Lauren Skultety 2nd Laura Gunneson
Meeting adjourned at 2:08 pm.