

Thomaston Early Childhood Council Minutes Meeting Date: May 3, 2019 1:00 pm

Topic	Agenda Item
Welcome & Community Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcements from Council Members, Community <i>In attendance:</i> Katie Bike, Kelly Dube, Nicole Sul, Aimee Turner (via phone), Jessica Fedorich, Kristen Kennen, Bruce Barrett
Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve minutes from last meeting Nicole made first motion, Katie made second motion, all approved
Program Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play and Learn CDC NAEYC Accreditation renewed – Katie shared info about her Accreditation Decision Report. They did extremely well: most Standards received 100%+. A challenge area for them was Standard 9: Physical Environment because they are not handicap accessible. • Black Rock School: NAEYC Accreditation Prep status - The Classroom Portfolio is completed and the Program Portfolio is almost done. Their 4th Annual Report has not been approved yet. NAEYC will not begin scheduling a visit until the 4th Annual Report is approved. Perhaps their Assessor visit will take place at the start of next school year? • General Updates – Black Rock School had their Open House nights and have selected children into the program. Demand exceeded supply. They have a Mother's Day event coming up and will also be doing a picnic in the evening which was designed to give families from both preschool classrooms a chance to get to know one another. In addition, 1X/week, they combine groups on the playground for children to expand their social horizons. Aimee reports that they applied to SDE for funds to purchase items like balance bikes, a sandbox, outdoor seating, and STEM materials, etc. Not certain when the notification will happen: probably by end of summer. Play and Learn has started enrollment for the Fall. There is a large waiting list for infant/toddler. Preschool is continuing to enroll. They had an event for the Week of the Young Child: Valentine the Clown came to do face painting. 75-80 were in attendance. There is also an ice cream social planned.
School Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019/2020 Grant Application Review/Outcomes: The grant review committee met a few weeks ago. Kristen thanked Jonathan and Ed for their participation. Both applicants were approved for

continued funding. Both applicants were provided with feedback on their application scores via a document sent by email.

- **Community Grant** – The Council had been sent four documents that needed to be reviewed and attested to for the community grant application. Each of the 4 documents were reviewed together at the meeting; the Council unanimously agrees to follow the requirements set forth within each of the documents (Overview and Description; Staff Qualifications/Registry; Local Request for Proposals; Grant Submission Information). A question in the grant asks for two recent and specific examples of how the SR Council has worked to improve at least two of the quality components. It was decided that Kindergarten Transition and Collaboration are two areas of strength for us to highlight. For Kindergarten Transition, all upcoming Kindergarteners from PAL go over to visit Black Rock School. They get to meet the kindergarten teacher they will be assigned to and spend time in that classroom. Two out of the three of such visits have already taken place. In addition, PAL provides input to BRS regarding placement and also helps to ensure that all PAL families actually do the registration process. There is a line item in the PAL School Readiness budget to provide transportation for these visits. For Collaboration, the Council identified several activities that make it an area of strength including the arrangement for BRS staff to support teachers at PAL regarding children with special education needs (in part this is done through QE funds). There were additional collaborations noted: both SR funded programs receive regular visits by the town librarian and PAL will do bi-weekly walking field trips there over the summer months. It was also noted that BRS has a partnership with a theatrical group that came to speak with the children about character education and the Susan B. Anthony project also did some visits to the preschool children to discuss conflict resolution and “hands are not for hitting”. Both SR funded programs collaborate with the Lion’s Club for vision screening. This happens for all age groups at PAL including the infants.
- **Freedom of Information:** First Selectman Mone has arranged for the Town Clerk to print all agendas and minutes to post on a bulletin board and to have them uploaded to the Town’s website. Kristen has sent all documents for the 2018-2019 program year to her.
- **Monitoring:** Two monitoring visits took place this week by the liaison: one to BRS and one to PAL. At BRS, there was a monitoring of the child health records and a classroom observation. At PAL, all three preschool classrooms were visited. It was noted that the teachers had created many books that pertain to the area of social studies/diversity. In both programs, the classroom monitoring visits documented that staff/child interactions were warm, nurturing, and rich with language

	experiences for the children. Each site received verbal and written feedback of the monitoring visits.
Quality Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on TA from BOE staff to PAL – A date has been set for Lisa to conduct a two hour PD session for PAL staff: June 4th at 6 pm. Content will include trauma sensitivity and responding to challenging behavior. There will still be QE funds available (approximately \$1000), however, so Aimee suggests that they be used to purchase materials to address some sensory needs of children at PAL so that they can more easily implement strategies that Lisa has suggested. These materials could include calm down jars, swings, sit and spins, etc. Katie is interested but wants more details on the materials to ensure that they would fit within licensing regulations or the program's needs. Aimee stated that a purchase requisition would need to be submitted by June 30th. • Next year's QE funds: We continued discussion from last meeting. The group determined that next year's QE funds could be used for the following: PD for teachers, a mental health counselor on retainer to address mental health needs of children, and equipment/materials.
Other	<p>Bruce announced that his term as Selectman ends in November and he will not seek re-election. He has held this position for 10 years and the Council thanked him for his commitment to the community. He will attend September and November's Council meetings and then will step down.</p> <p>Jessica will not have a preschool child in either program next year but is interested in staying on the Council: her younger son will be preschool eligible the following year!</p>
Adjourn at 2:45	<p>Schedule of meetings for 19/20 school year were determined to be as follows:</p> <p>September 6, November 1, January 3, March 6, and May 1</p>