



**VERNON SCHOOL READINESS COUNCILS**  
**Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting**  
**June 1, 2017**

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**Members Present:** Marcia Ambrose (YMCA), Stephanie Grant (FRC/ECHN), Michelle Hill (YSB), Renee DaSilva (VPS), Allison Altieri (B28), Betsy Crayton (ECHN), Jaisa Diaz (First Choice Health Centers)

**Guest Speakers:** Kathi Legare (CEO), and Zach Leone (CFO) of the Family Affirmation Center for Treatment (FACT), 130 Old Town Rd, Vernon Rockville, CT 06066

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

Motion to Accept the April minutes was made by Renee DaSilva and seconded by Betsy Crayton. Minutes were accepted.

Michelle Hill provided a brief overview of the functions and purpose of the School Readiness Council for those new to the group.

Presentation by Kathi Legare of the Family Affirmation Center for Treatment, provided an overview of FACT, the process getting the center established during the past year, it's goals moving forward, day to day challenges and areas they are seeing successes. The Center focuses on children learning self-regulation, how to be safe, and to make good choices. Kathi also reported that they work with several communities and have successful relations with a couple of Vernon schools. Information regarding the program and services offered will be shared with the Council. The center mainly treats children (and their families) between ages 0-8 with a few exceptions. In addition, they have also worked with families, schools, and daycare programs to make transitions back into programs easier and more successful.

#### **School Readiness/PDG Updates:**

Both the YMCA School Readiness slots and VPS SR and PDG slots are currently filled. Projections for the fall currently look manageable with the YMCA anticipating 7 openings as children move up to kindergarten. The Public Schools currently note 21 open PDG slots but placements are being made, there are 15 families on the wait-list and families are starting to make their decisions for fall enrollment.

**Council Co-Chair Update** – the 2017-2018 School Readiness Grant has been submitted for the same number of slots as we currently have, and both VPS and the YMCA applied to house the SR students.

Michelle also informed the Council that the Birth to Eight Coordinator position would be dissolved and the current coordinator applied for a position within the Vernon Board of Education. The SR Liaison funding will remain and a new liaison would need to be hired if/when that position is left vacant.

**SR Liaison Update** – Renee DaSilva was able to attend the statewide meeting yesterday and reported that there is currently a proposal on the Governor's desk to save school readiness from budget cuts waiting to be signed.

**Birth to Eight Coordinator Update** –An overview of the vision screening done in 4 locations during, April 24<sup>th</sup> – April 29<sup>th</sup>, the Week of the Young Child. Staff were very helpful at each location and results will be tabulated shortly. The group was informed about event dates for the new Family School Community Partnership Center and all VSRC members were invited to provide tri-folds or other outreach materials for the Center to display at the June 12<sup>th</sup>, Open House. All are welcome to attend.

The Summer Bookmobile will be starting back up in late June and the B28 Coordinator met with Jill Meriam earlier this week to discuss marketing of the bookmobile and Key Hyundai ideas on how her staff could be more engaged with the

discussed further. She committed to continuing the funding for the bookmobile moving forward. In addition, the staffing change with the B28 position will require that a new person is brought on to ride the bookmobile on Tues, and Thurs over a 7 week period. The Coordinator has written a temporary contracted position description for approval and publication.

**Member Updates:**

Betsy Crayton of ECHN announced a new state-wide initiative, Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Project, or NAS, that is based on a Yale study around newborns who are addicted to a substance being treated with parent/s onsite at NICU to hold the baby, ease stress, feed on demand, and not isolate the babies and be regimented on a 3 hour feeding cycle. Data was overwhelmingly positive for the babies and parents in the study which has led to the sweeping changes for Connecticut natal centers.

Submitted by Allison Altieri

